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BIOGRAPHY

OF

MRS. J. H. CONANT,

THE

WORLD'S MEDIUM

OF THE

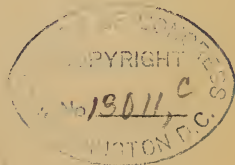
NINETEENTH CENTURY:

BEING A HISTORY OF HER MEDIUMSHIP FROM CHILDHOOD TO
THE PRESENT TIME; TOGETHER WITH EXTRACTS FROM THE
DIARY OF HER PHYSICIAN; SELECTIONS FROM LETTERS
RECEIVED VERIFYING SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS GIVEN
THROUGH HER ORGANISM AT THE BANNER OF LIGHT
FREE CIRCLES; SPECIMEN MESSAGES, ESSAYS,
AND INVOCATIONS FROM VARIOUS INTEL-
LIGENCES IN THE OTHER LIFE,
ETC., ETC., ETC.

OPENING REMARKS,

BY

ALLEN PUTNAM.



BOSTON: ②

WILLIAM WHITE AND COMPANY,

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PREFATORY REMARKS.

BY ALLEN, PUTNAM.

THE accompanying biography is so simply and lucidly told, that it will explain itself to the reader, and needs no comments in advance.

A few words relating to its authorship and the circumstances of its production, may properly come from one who read it while in manuscript, but was in no way connected with its production. I am told, and believe, that spirit Theodore Parker outlined and dictated its essential substance, and may be deemed its responsible producer.

Mr. John W. Day, a reporter at the *Banner of Light* office, listened on many occasions to utterances through Mrs. Conant while she was under control by Parker, and minuted in shorthand what that spirit desired to put forth as a biography of his medium. Subsequently, Mr. Day wrote out in full, under the guidance of memory and impression, aided by Mrs. Conant's statements while in her normal condition — by facts and reminiscences furnished by Mr. Colby, chief editor of the *Banner* — and by the diary of Mrs. Conant's physician. The style of composition is probably that of the amanuensis, while the arrangement and leading facts and reflections should be ascribed to Parker.

The peculiar properties, gifts, utterances, labors, sufferings, and fame of its subject give to the work its chief interest. It is a simple, straight-forward narrative, even though a dead man here describes the life lines of a living woman.

Prophets and seers, through all the ages, have generally had

singular and hard experiences. This "World's Medium" furnishes no exception to the general rule.

Objection was made to styling Mrs. Conant the "World's Medium" on the title page. The reply was that for many years the doors of her circle room have, tri-weekly, been thrown freely open to *the world*—to all comers whatsoever, and that it is in this sense only—viz., her accessibility by the world, and the extent to which the world has approached her, that she is here called the World's Medium. She has been the channel through which more than ten thousand different spirits have sent messages to their kindred and friends on earth. No claim is made here, even by implication, that she is the world's greatest or its best medium—but only that she has been put more at the service of the broad world than any other.

Wherever mediumship exists, its germs have been in its possessor from the hour of conception—they are innate—and not special gifts to their possessor because of some moral excellencies which the past life has manifested. Like the poet, the musician, or the mathematician, a medium is born possessor of all the faculties that are ever afterwards unfolded in the organism.

The biography of an eminent medium need contain no words which imply that the subject possesses in marked degree either intellectual, moral, or religious properties or qualities. Such characteristics are no more essential to success in mediumship, than in music, painting, or any line of art or any occupation. Therefore, whatever excellencies, acquirements, or blemishes his subject may possess as a woman, the essential author of the following pages has made no attempt to give them publicity. She is presented only as a medium, through whom light and information from the spirit world have more or less directly reached the minds of millions upon earth, and of whose *mediumistic* life hundreds of thousands will be glad to learn.

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PART I.

INTRODUCTION—EARLY LIFE AND MANIFESTATIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE are two questions which have followed like phantoms the footsteps of each generation along the years: "Is this state of material being all that is in store for us?" and "If we indeed survive the shock of death, shall we remember those we loved on earth, and be able to make our presence known to them?"

The great mass of humanity — in whatever age or country — has instinctively repelled the thought of annihilation, although, as a minority idea, it has frequently found existence in peculiarly organized minds. After-life, in some form, however crude in its conditions, has been the incentive of all the moral ethics and religious formulas to which time has given birth.

It would seem that to him who sincerely questions of his interior consciousness the verity of immortality in hours of twilight or midnight silence, when the toils of the day are done — or in the brooding presence of some chilling sorrow, when the loved of earth have passed the bounds of mortal ken — there can be but one answer which comes therefrom, and that is, that the *ego* (my inner being) is deathless and indestructible. From the earliest dawn of reason as evidenced in the acts of the primitive races, and foreshortened upon the canvas of time by archæology, man has been convinced in some way — though the process may be inexplicable at times — that he is really twofold in nature; that as the seed in the material world contains the germ of life and the nutritive principle which is to sustain that life till it gains power to draw from the surrounding soil its daily supply, so his body is

but the nucleus of higher possibilities, containing in itself a power that is to live after it has exhausted all the vital food which the physical form can offer, by drawing from the soil and atmosphere of a contiguous and higher — though unseen and mystical — country the nutriment which shall expand it to full development.

This wide-spread and intuitive looking for immortality has affirmatively decided the first question ; but the correct answer to the companion query concerning the after communication of the so-called dead, while it has been also shadowed upon the traditions and beliefs of all races, and partially embodied in certain religious systems, has not met with the universal acknowledgment among mankind which it merits — in too many cases being arbitrarily placed in abeyance by those who, having charge of the rising generations of the people, educate them to treat the subject from standpoints antagonistic to the use of God's choicest gift — the human reason !

Nevertheless, in obedience to the ever-increasing enlightenment of the world, we find in the nineteenth century the cropping out of a wondrous *demonstration* of the truth of man's aforesaid dim and clouded conceptions or inexplicable convictions. To the hearts of millions in America, England, France, Germany, Russia, and other civilized countries the fact has become patent, through conclusive evidence — both mental and physical — that there is "a continued, conscious existence beyond the change called death ;" and that those in that state of being, but little advanced by the process — ascending only in the scale by subsequent development, from that position to which their conduct while in earth life logically assigned them — can identify themselves to those whom they once cherished. This new principle of belief has been designated "SPIRITUALISM," whose meaning Hayward's *Book of All Religions* informs us may be stated in a single proposition :

"That disembodied human spirits sometimes manifest themselves, or make known their presence and power, to persons in the earthly body, and hold realized communication with them."

This is the great truth which the present age has given to cheer the whilom dark pathway to the tomb with the glory of a coming world of eternal progression, and to drown the dismal dirge which the sombre, cave-arched waves of death's Jordan have chanted for ages gone, with the thrilling music of angelic welcome to life's "evergreen hills!" Right has found its willing martyrs in every age. Men and women, filled with an irresistible impulse whose source is from above, have in its cause fearlessly dared whatever of physical anguish or mental disquietude the bigots of their day could heap upon them; and in this nineteenth century many who recognize within them the voice of consecration are, like their prototypes of old, devoting their self-sacrificing labors upon the public rostrum, in the seance, through the columns of the spiritual press, and every avenue in social life, for the advancement of a knowledge of this new revelation among men, without fear and without adequate reward — hoping only for the harvest which their children's eyes shall see. Happy in feeling that "He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined into their hearts"—knowing that they "have this treasure in earthen vessels" that the glory may be ascribed to the true source of inspiration, they continue — as does the subject of this sketch — while "troubled on every side, yet not distressed," "perplexed, but not in despair," to proclaim to a world lost in the glaring wastes of material gain, and misled by erroneous educational guides.

"God is not dumb, that he should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 't is thy soul is poor;
There towers the Mountain of the Voice no less,
Which whoso seeks shall find, but he who bends
Intent on manna still, and mortal ends,
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore!"



BIOGRAPHY.

I.

THE following record has been prepared, that the reader may know somewhat of the strange experiences, deep sufferings, sharp trials, and noble fruits which have attended the life line of only a single individual among the many apostles of the new dispensation, and learn to value the gift of spirit communion in proportion to its cost.

Frances Ann Crowell was born in Portsmouth, N. H., April 28th, 1831. Her parents, named Peter and Hannah, respectively, were in moderate circumstances, and at the time of her birth resided on Parker Street, in the western portion of the (then) town.

When about the age of six years, she commenced attending a private school near her home, kept by Mrs. Leach, a widow lady; this she continued to be connected with for about eighteen months, when she entered one of the public schools of the town on Cabot Street—Mr. Blaisdell, preceptor. After the lapse of some months her father removed to another district—the southern part of the town—and she was enrolled among the scholars of Mrs. Marshall,

who prepared girls to enter the high school. Owing to sickness she was not able to attend regularly, being kept from her studies nearly half the time.

On her attaining the age of eleven she left this school, and never attended any other. The foregoing institutions in Portsmouth, and the limited time spent therein, have been her only opportunities for education, as that word is commonly used.

II.

Her mediumistic faculties existed from her earliest years, although for a long time she did not understand what was meant by them. When about seven years of age she was prostrated by a fever, and one evening she heard her mother, while watching by her bedside, conversing with some person apparently in the room, who in her bewildered condition she supposed to be one of the neighbors. Finally, rousing herself to partial consciousness, she gazed around the apartment, but failed to see the individual addressed. Her mother not detecting the movement, and supposing she still slept, continued the conversation. At last childish curiosity gained the ascendancy over weakness, and the little one asked :

“Who are you talking with, mother?”

“Why, my child,” replied her parent, “I thought you were asleep,” and she endeavored to turn the attention of the patient to some other subject. But the anxiety of the daughter could not be appeased, and finally her mother said :

“Well, my dear, I was talking to the angels.”

“The angels, mother! I thought they lived in heaven.”

"Yes, but they sometimes come to talk with us in this world."

The future medium having never been brought face to face with the matter before, was strangely moved, and feared that her mother must have become suddenly deranged. "Who are the angels, mother?" she asked.

"The angels, my daughter, are those who once lived on this earth, but who are now called dead. Your little sister is an angel."

"So you were talking to them?"

"Yes."

"What did they say?"

"Your little sister tells me that you are to recover."

III.

From that day, like one of old, she "kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart," wondering if those scenes and persons she sometimes beheld, though others could not, were really of angelic origin, as the philosophy of her mother would seem to indicate. She heard raps, and saw articles of furniture moved in her room when she knew no mortal hand was there to perform the acts; and she gravely considered these—the first, premonitory drops of the great shower yet to come—with a depth of interest beyond her years. Her mother, yielding to her importunities, talked frequently with her, explaining the matter as fully as she herself understood it at that early period (ten years before the accepted date of the advent of Modern Spiritualism) and prophesied that her daughter would one day know more concerning it.

At that time — and to the hour of her decease — her mother was a member, in regular standing, of the Chestnut Street Baptist Church, and her friends were sorely troubled at the thought of the “wild delusion” which had taken possession of “Sister Crowell.” When her daughter was about nine years old, Mrs. C., was seized with a severe illness which threatened her life. She grew rapidly worse, and one black midnight the little Fannie was called up by a member of the affrighted household, and told to dress herself with all speed and summon the physician who lived two miles away, as her mother was dying. She arose hastily and in youthful trepidation rushed out into the darkness with her bonnet under her arm, a shoe upon one of her feet, and its companion in her hand — she intending to put it on as she journeyed. In her trouble she lost her shoe and her way also, and found herself alone in the broad unsettled suburb outlying the “South Road” as it is called. She was extremely frightened, and ran rapidly, with a hope of finding some familiar object. Suddenly she fell, and, as she supposed, fainted away — but after-experience has shown her that she passed into the state of trance. When she returned to consciousness — or came out of the trance — she saw a tall gentleman standing by her side. She looked at him at first with joy at the hope of finding her way and gaining the physician’s house in time to be of assistance to her mother, but there was something in his appearance which filled her with indefinable awe.

“You have lost your way, little one,” he said, kindly.

“Yes, sir,” she replied.

“Come with me,” he continued, “and I will show you where you wish to go.”

Fear again struggled for the mastery: “He is a stranger to me — how does *he* know where I wish to go?” queried the child, as she looked earnestly at the luminous form before her. “Is *he* an angel?” She again supposed she fainted from fright, but was really entranced, and did not recover control of her senses till she found herself at the doctor’s door with her guide, where the spirit — for such it really was — informed her that he was Epimenides, an ancient Greek, and that he had come in answer to her prayer. This to her seemed strange, but was true, as she had kept up a mental cry — though she had not spoken it aloud — to the angels, in the midst of her fears, that they would come and help her, and retain her mother in life till she could return to the house. Her efforts were successful; the doctor and a friend her mother desired to see were both summoned, and the failing patient recovered. Fannie often after this occurrence felt the influence of her mysterious friend — she did not always see him, but knew that he was near.

IV.

Sometime after this event, and when she was about ten years of age, while playing, at the hour of twilight, she suddenly fell in what was pronounced a fit by her medical attendants, and remained in an unconscious condition till three o’clock on the following morning. On her returning to a cognizance of surrounding things her glance fell first upon two well known professional gentleman, Dr. Cheever (a cele-

brated physician of Portsmouth, and well known while in life throughout New England,) and Dr. Dwight; the one held a spoon, the other was endeavoring to force her teeth apart sufficiently for the administration of the prepared prescription. She then passed into the trance, and while so conditioned, some spirit, evidently well versed in the intricacies of pharmacopæial lore, gave directions through her lips to the two wonder-struck M. D.'s, as to what should be done for the betterment of her case. Although the physicians considered this as merely the result of an abnormal state of the brain, yet they acknowledged the advice given, to be astonishingly scientific, and such as it would be well for them to follow — which they did, thus presenting an exhibition of remarkable professional liberality, though it was perfectly in keeping with the general dealings of the fearless gentlemen in question. Her sickness at this time proved a serious matter, extending over a period of six months, during most of which these physicians attended her; they then gave up the case into the hands of Dr. Goddard, also of Portsmouth. Through all this season of trial, as soon as either physician entered the room the young patient would be entranced, and if he was about to administer anything which her "guides" (as she afterward learned by increased knowledge of the facts of spirit communion) thought she ought not to have, they, through her organism, would refuse, and make a prescription themselves. All the physicians employed considered her case a most remarkable one; she was visited by Drs. Lynton, Kelley, and many others from different parts of New Hampshire and Massachusetts, all of

whom were desirous of tracing the workings of the peculiar "disease" for themselves. These investigators finally came to the conclusion that she was troubled with some new derangement of the brain with which the medical faculty were not yet acquainted.

V.

Soon after Fannie's recovery, her mother was again prostrated by sickness — which proved to be her last — and with this event commenced the occurrence of many singular spirit manifestations, both mental and physical in character. So startling were these displays of invisible force, that neither money or friendship would induce persons to stay in the house with the patient. As soon as the disturbances began, away ran every one in mortal fright, leaving upon the daughter the entire burden of household duties and the care of her afflicted parent.

When she was about eleven years of age this period of anxious and self-devoting labor drew to a close, and her parent, slowly sinking, passed the reaches of mortality. A few days previous to her decease she called the little one to her bedside, and said :

"Fannie, I am going to leave you," upon which the sad-faced child cried out, "Oh take me with you."

"No, my dear," replied the mother, "God has a wondrous work for you to do in after years, and you must stay here and perform it."

Fannie had been before *impressed to feel* a vague outlining of some remarkable course in life reserved

for her, but nothing definitive had been portrayed, and she again said:

“Oh, how can I do anything without a mother?”

“My dear,” answered the parent, “the angels will be your father and mother. When you come to meet me in heaven, bring me a clear record that you have always obeyed them. You will know more concerning this by and by.”

In after-time when the child had grown to womanhood, and was present at her first understood spiritual *seance*, the remembrance of that mother’s prophecy, coming to her like the echo of a refrain across the years, was the great cause of her assenting to the demands of the spirit world as expressed by Dr. Fisher.

At the time of her mother’s decease, raps were heard and electric lights seen in the chamber, and the child medium was frequently entranced; indeed, so much of her vitality was consumed previous to this event in supplying the needs of the sinking one, that when those attending took her away from the cold form of her arisen parent, she herself was, as she expresses it, “nearer dead than alive.” During her mother’s departure from the form the little one beheld a strange vision—unseen to others in the room—akin to that which has so often been portrayed since by clairvoyants, but which at that time she failed to understand. Andrew Jackson Davis, the wonderful seer, has beautifully described the process in his recent work, “THE TEMPLE,” as seen by himself on other occasions in after years:

* * * “‘Death’ is the word used to signify ‘the *end* of life,’ spoken by persons who see not that seeming death is really

'the beginning of life,' and the opening of the sacred volume of eternity. But let us peer through the seeming, into that which *is* within the veil.

"The person is now dying; and it is to be a rapid death. Observe something about temperature. The feet are cold; the hands hot and white; a coldness pervades the entire cuticle. See? What is that accumulating in the atmosphere just over the pillowed head? It is an ethereal emanation—a golden magnetic halo—a throbbing, almost self-conscious atmosphere.

"The bodily temperature is now lowering rapidly. The coldness has extended upward from the toes to the knees, and from the finger tips to the elbows; while, in exactly the same ratio, the *emanation* has ascended higher over the head. The arms are now cold to the shoulders, and legs to the hips; and the emanation, although not higher in the air, is more expanded, with a compact white centre, resembling the bright nucleus of a miniature sun. This brilliant central spot is, in very truth, the brain of the new spiritual organism now forthcoming.

"The death-cold steals over the heaving breast, and around on either side the temperature is greatly diminished. Look now! The psychic emanation contains some proportion of every principle composing the soul—motion, life, sensation, ethers, essences, vital magnetism, vital electricity, instincts—and, much enlarged by accessions, it has floated up in a compact mass, and now occupies a higher altitude near the ceiling.

"Now the lungs have ceased to breathe, the pulse is still, the physical heart is motionless; while the brain cells, the corpus callosum, the medulla, and the spinal cord and ganglia, are ablaze with contractive and expansive energies, which gently pulsate and seem to direct and govern themselves by a kind of automatic self-consciousness. See! The negative (gray) substance of the brain is interiorly throbbing—a slow, measured, profoundly deep throb—not painful, but massive and harmonious like the deep heart-beat of the sea.

"Look up! The exalted emanation, obedient to its own changeless laws, is now elongated, and has attained a position at right angles with the horizontal body below. Behold! *See how the outline of a beautiful human form is being fashioned within that emanation.* Beneath it is still tied by a white life-cord to the medulla and the corpus callosum within the brain. * * *

"You observe that a very fine vitalic thread still connects the vortices and central fibres of the dying brain with the lower extremities of the exalted outlined human being in the atmosphere.

Notwithstanding the existence of this life-thread, which acts like a telegraphic conductor—conveying messages in opposite directions at the same moment—you observe that the shadowy image, enveloped in a golden emanation, continues almost imperceptibly to ascend skyward.

“There! What do I now see? A symmetrically shaped human head rising above the mass—slowly, beautifully rising out of the golden cloud of substantial principles. And now appear the outlines of a spiritual countenance—a quiet face and full of beauty, surpassing the power of words to delineate. Look again! behold emerging the fair neck and beautiful shoulders; and see! as we gaze, out come, one after the other, in rapid succession, as if influenced and directed by the wand of a magician, *all the parts of a new body*—a bright, natural looking, yet spiritual image—only a little less than the deserted physical body, a perfect re-appearance of the person in the immediate heavens, prepared to accompany the celestial group of superintending intelligences to the Summerland.

“What was *that*? In the twinkling of an eye the vitalic electrical telegraphic thread was snapped—the yet lingering particles and principles were suddenly attracted upward and absorbed into the spiritual body—and lo! the new organization is free of terrestrial gravitations, is instantly and absolutely independent of the weights and cares that chained it firmly imprisoned to earth. (Those only are *free* at death who have lived righteously. Any enthralling passion, the least feeling of duty undischarged, of injustice committed, holds the spirit to earth, as a ship is fastened by a heavy anchor. Only the pure are free.)

“Here now behold a true, substantial, immortal, spiritual body. It was sown in darkness and dishonor; it is raised in beauty and brightness.

“Behold the contrast—the vastly wide difference—between the interior and outward. Cast your eyes around the room. There are many friends, aged relatives, and little children, in the death chamber; * * * they mourn, without the comfort even of blind faith; they grieve, with only the whisperings of hope to the doubting ear; they gather around the prostrate, cold body; they press together the lids of the sightless eyes; in silence and in sorrow they withdraw from the scene; and now other hands commence those final preparations with which the living consecrate the dead.

“But let us open our brighter eyes—the eyes that we shall all have when clothed with the deathless garment of immortality.

See! The newly organized spiritual body—surrounded by a group of guardian angels—moves gracefully off in the direction of celestial shores. The arisen personality follows a vibrating thread of magnetic attraction, which while the dying mutations were in process we noticed penetrating the apartment and fastening itself to the earthly brain of the resurrected. It comes floating down from the sensorium of superior intelligences—a golden fibrillous stream of telegraphic light—sent from on high, to greet with love and guide with wisdom the newly arisen. * * * The thought-laden love-thread tranquilly draws the new born higher up and farther away. * * *

“Over the velvet lands and flower fields of the celestial country the bending bow of eternal promise is visible, filling with indescribable beauty the boundless ocean of world-laden skies, which cover with infinite loveliness the immeasurable zone-lands of the Hereafter.”

Here, then, in that lonely sick room at Portsmouth, years before the world had heard this voice that lifted the veil, “youth, the perpetual counterpart and companion of old age,” endeavored to cheer the lonely traveller, and the young child, whose name was destined to be known among the friends of liberal thought the world over, hung with breathless earnestness over the form of a mother in a physical sense soon to be no more. She tells us that she saw the brilliant emanation rise and stand above the body; “I thought it was an angel, but it *looked* like my mother. When she turned to go away she appeared to know me, and gazed so kindly upon me; yet she seemed anxious to go, and I was much frightened. The room was full of spirits—some strange faces, and some whom I had known while on earth.”

Though she sometimes saw her mother,—as other departed ones—by means of her spiritual perceptions, it was not until she was twenty-two years of

age that she received a message from her through the organism of another medium.

VI.

Her father gave in his adhesion to no form of religion, being opposed to the same in every shape, but thought, at the time of his wife's decease, that some clergyman should be summoned to attend her funeral. As before stated, Mrs. Crowell was a member in regular standing in the Baptist Church, though she had, previous to her death, fallen under the shade of the priestly ban by reason of the strange manifestations occurring at her house, which were denominated by her neighbors "dealings with the devil." When his daughter asked who was to be the parson summoned for the observance of the last rites, Peter replied: "I suppose *her* minister; do you know where he lives?" "Yes," replied Fannie; whereupon she was directed to go and request him to attend. She repaired to his residence, but when the trembling child announced her errand, he positively refused to officiate as pastor on the occasion, because of the "dealings" aforesaid.

"Directly," she says, "I felt an entire change in my feelings; a strong disgust took possession of me, together with a desire to *kick* the reverend bigot; in fact, I do not know what restrained me from it. I left the house and sat down upon the door-step outside, wondering what I *should* do. While I sat there, the same noble presence who met me on the night when I lost my way several years before while, looking for a physician for my mother, appeared to me, and said, kindly:

‘Little one, go to Mr. Robinson, the Methodist preacher; *he* will come.’

‘But,’ said I, ‘I do n’t know him, or where he lives.’

‘I will show you,’ replied the spirit.’”

She was then thrown into a trance as before, and on regaining consciousness, found herself at the door of the minister’s residence. She called for the gentleman, and when she had explained her errand, and told the manner in which she had been treated by the Baptist clergyman, Mr. Robinson exclaimed, with hearty indignation: “My dear, I am almost ashamed to acknowledge that I live in this age! Certainly I will go to your mother’s funeral.” He did attend, and performed the services in a manner at once soothing and sympathetic.

VII.

Her father procured a housekeeper, and the tide of life bore the little lonely one along upon its breast to the fulfillment of her mission. She used frequently to see spirits, and sometimes heard their voices as plainly as those of mortals. She was frequently very much frightened because those she saw were strangers. At intervals she was cheered by the sight of her mother. There was no one to reveal to this isolated child more of the mystery of the law of communion than her mother had given her in the conversations upon the subject, had while she was on earth, for Spiritualism had not yet dawned with “healing in its wings,” and with but few marked exceptions the spirits seen by her seemed as ignorant as herself of the proper methods of expression to be used.

When she arrived at the age of fifteen years, for her the current of life deepened, and she was launched upon the sea of active labor. She left her childhood home by the winding Piscataqua, and went to Lowell, Mass. Here she engaged herself as a tailoress, working at that business till she attained the age of twenty, when she was united in marriage with John H. Conant, a grandson of Prof. John Hubbard, of Dartmouth College.

While residing here, she was told by the invisible ones, concerning whom she was as yet ignorant save as to their palpable existence to her interior perceptions, that the line of descent to be traced in the history of her progenitors was extremely interesting: that her great grandfather, known to the whites as "Swift-Foot," was an Indian chief of renown in the early history of the New World, his name, Quinsigamond — still borne by a fine sheet of water in Massachusetts — serving as a memento of his high place among men; that he was married to a French Canadian woman, the grandmother of Peter Crowell being the result of that union; that this daughter's Indian name was Meona, her English, Betsey; that she was in turn married to an individual bearing the name of Crowell — or as it should be, Cromwell, for he was a descendant of one of the three Cromwells, Thomas, William and John, who left England during the time of Charles II. These three brothers, on leaving the mother country, were never heard of afterward, but Mrs. Conant was assured by the spirits that they came to America, and could be traced as far as their settlement in Canada, where the *m* in their name was suppressed by them that they might

not be known. One of their descendants, as afore-said, settling in life, married the Indian girl Meona, or Betsey, Peter, Fannie's father, being the child of that union. Thus in direct line — though by aid of spirit perception and information rather than mortal — the medium was enabled to trace her descent on one side from the English Cromwells, and on the other from a chief of the American Indians. Of this peculiar extraction she was kept in ignorance till just previous to her marriage, when she discovered it, and, determined to prove the truth or falsity of the report, wrote to her father in Portsmouth; from words received in return, further inquiries in other localities, and the recalling of little memories of her early childhood, she was enabled to fix a material certainty to her descent on *one* side from the aborigines, and was thus led to give full credence to the assertions of her mysterious attendants as regarded the others. She was able, among other things, to recall to mind that on a certain occasion when she was very young, her father went to visit his mother, who was then living in the northern part of Vermont, and, returning, brought her many articles of skillful Indian workmanship as presents from her grandmother. These she had exhibited in childish triumph to all who visited the house, exclaiming, "My grandmother made these," till her mother, who seemed not to relish the relationship to the red man, thus so fully avowed, had taken them from her and hidden them. She was never able to discover the fate of these little offerings, to which in after years she would have attached inestimable value, but the circumstance was to her a strong link in the chain of conviction.



PART II.

SHE BECOMES A PUBLIC MEDIUM.

PART II.

—“By that world of beauty,
And by that life of love,
And by the holy angels
Who listen now above,
I pledge my soul's endeavor
To do whate'er I can
To bless my sister woman,
And aid my brother man.”

—*Lizzie Doten.*

I.

IN the year 1851 she left Lowell, and, with her husband, came to reside at the North End of Boston. Here her health, never robust, gave way, and she was again prostrated by sickness. Dr. Tobey, a well known physician, was summoned to attend her, who in view of the exigencies of the case, prescribed a certain preparation of morphine—he being at the time, unfortunately, under the influence of stimulants. Mr. Conant obtained the prescription, as ordered, from a neighboring apothecary, and it was administered, per directions, to his wife. The amount written down by Dr. Tobey proved to be a large overdose; she was thrown into a semi-unconscious state, and began to sink so rapidly as to alarm all those residing in the house. Mr. Conant immediately proceeded to the doctor's office to apprise

him of the fact. He inquired concerning the medicine and its effect—became agitated, and hurried to the sick chamber. A glance told him that there was some mistake in the remedy administered, and the imminent danger of his patient immediately sobered him. He doubted that he had prescribed so much, and was utterly confounded when, on applying to the druggist, he found the prescription filed in his own handwriting—the apothecary meanwhile assuring him that he should not have put up the medicine in such quantity had he not known him well, and supposed that he was acquainted with his business. Dr. Tobey said there was no help for Mrs. Conant—she must die. She, however, told him that she should not. During the absence of her husband in search of the physician, the second time, Mrs. C. had been mysteriously aroused from the deathly stupor—her body was shaken, involuntarily as it seemed, and a series of shocks, as from an electric battery, passed through her frame; she then began to speak, and prescribed for herself as she had done frequently before at Portsmouth in her childhood. The medicine, which was something of a simple nature, had been given to her, and by its influence, while the terrified physician stood by her side anticipating her speedy dissolution, perspiration began to set in, and witnessing this sign of returning power—though ignorant of its cause—he declared, with great relief to his mind, that she would yet survive. Although neither herself nor the parties in the house were at that time disposed to attribute the cure to the agency of spirits—by reason of want of information on the subject—yet in after years she

was told, through the organism of a medium, William Rice, whom she had never before seen, and who was a perfect stranger to the facts in the case, that she had been restored through the efforts of Dr. Kirtledge, an old physician of her native town, who had been several years in the spirit world.

Nature rallied, and she rapidly recovered. When she regained full consciousness, she remembered that she seemed to have been in some beautiful place, she thought was heaven. Here she met the mother who left her in earlier years, and when she wept and begged to be allowed to stay with her, her parent gently but firmly told her that she must return to earth life — that she had yet a mission to perform — and her poor tempest-tossed bark was again obliged to put to sea from out the haven of peace where it hoped to rest; but blessed were the assurances she received, that in due time she should again and finally cast anchor amid the golden sand that sparkles in the river of Paradise.

II.

At the age of twenty-one she was attacked by a severe illness, pronounced by the physicians to be consumption of the blood, and no hope of restoration appeared for her. She remained for a long time under the care of several prominent medical men of Boston, but received no help, and her journey of life seemed about to end. While in this condition, a lady, Mrs. Bryant, with whom she was boarding, asked her: "Why don't you try a medium?" This was in the incipient stage of public spirit communion, and Mrs. Conant had not as yet considered the subject of Spirit-

ualism, as a definite thing. "A medium!" she exclaimed, "what is a medium?"

"A person," replied Mrs. Bryant, "through whom spirits — or dead folks — can come to talk with their friends in earth life. I can introduce you to a fine one, who has worked many wonderful cures."

"Well," responded Mrs. C., "there seems to be no hope from the doctors, and I will try, though I have no expectation of receiving any good from it."

Mrs. Bryant then introduced her to Miss Anna Richardson, aged some fifteen or sixteen years, who was a medium of great promise in those days. Mrs. C. took her seat, the medium became entranced, and then for the first time, in a practical sense, she discovered what her own powers denoted. Dr. John Dix Fisher, an old Boston physician, controlled Miss Richardson, as a medical adviser, and, after carefully considering Mrs. C.'s malady, said:

"Your case has been pronounced hopeless, but I do not consider it so. If you will obey my instructions, and do what I require in payment, in three weeks I will have you well; but I shall charge you what perhaps *you* will call a heavy fee."

Mrs. Conant answered that she had not much to pay with, as she was not possessed of pecuniary means, to which she supposed he referred.

"I will state my terms," he said, "and then you may decide as to whether you can meet them, or not. You have some of the finest mediumistic powers that I have ever seen, and the world ought to have the full benefit of them."

"*I!*" exclaimed Mrs. C.

"Most certainly," returned the spirit physician;

"You are yet to be a remarkable medium if you will give your consent." He then proceeded to render a correct synopsis of her past life and experiences, fully explaining those sights, sounds, and occurrences which had been so strange to her from childhood. These, he informed her, were perceived and recognized in consequence of her mediumistic capacity of discernment. While she sat rapt in astonishment at the revelation, the spirit continued:

"You *are* a spirit medium, and the fee I require in consideration of your case, is that you will give your powers to the world hereafter."

Still failing to understand the proposition, Mrs. Conant said, "What do you mean by giving my powers to the world?"

"By becoming a public medium," rejoined Dr. Fisher: "*I* want you for a medium, myself, and this is the fee I exact for your cure."

After some hesitation, in which wonder and anxiety were nearly balanced in her mind, she replied: "Well, Doctor, I will pay the fee." The spirit physician then began working for her benefit, and in three weeks from that date — as he predicted in commencing the case — his medicines had wrought such a perceptible improvement in her, that all her friends united in declaring they should not recognize her as the same person they had known previous to the commencement of his treatment.

III.

The Doctor then prepared for business with his new medium, and as an introductory step, by writing through her hand while entranced, demanded that she should change her place of abode, not giving any

particular reason for it at the time — though the benefit was afterward apparent — but seeming to wish to test her confidence in him. She indicated her willingness to comply, but when he directed her to go to a certain place on Hanover Street, Boston, which she knew to be a large and very popular boarding-house, where rooms were rarely, if ever, vacant, she did not entertain much faith that her errand would be successful. She however called at the house, saw the landlady, Mrs. M. E. Cates, and was told, as she anticipated, that there was not a vacant apartment therein. The landlady desired to know who recommended her to come, and upon Mrs. Conant's telling her (after some misgivings concerning Mrs. Cates's belief in her sanity,) that John Dix Fisher, a "dead doctor," had sent her there, she exclaimed:

"Oh, Dr. Fisher told you to come, did he? Then there must be something in it. He always has a reason for what he does; he would not have sent you here if he had not seen that I was soon to have a vacancy. Call again to-morrow, and we will see what can be done."

It appeared that the landlady, and many of her patrons were firm believers in the new doctrine of spirit return — that George A. Redman, the celebrated medium, was at that time in the house, giving public séances for physical manifestations every evening, and that Dr. Fisher had thus introduced his medium — unwittingly to herself — into a congenial home. That very evening, Mr. Redman called upon the landlady and gave notice that as he was in a short time to remove his office further "up town," his room would be vacant. Upon Mrs. Conant's calling next

day she was so informed, and securing it, was at once the possessor of a location, already magnetized by the presence of a powerful medium and the oft-repeated sésances which had been held there; an advantage which, however hidden to the skeptic, will be immediately apparent to those at all conversant with the delicacy of the conditions necessary for successful and easy control.

IV.

Dr. Fisher now desired her to commence her mediumistic duties, as per agreement. She resisted for awhile, but yielded at last and began serving him as a public instrument for medical examinations and prescriptions, having wonderful success in all the cases undertaken, and being from the first, literally overburdened with employment. At this house the most singular manifestations occurred in her presence, both of a mental and physical character. At first it was found that the magnetic aid of the sister of the landlady — Martha Smith — was necessary — she serving as a battery to supply the vital force required for spirit manifestations—but in time Mrs. C. became developed to such an extent in mediumistic power as to no longer require her presence. A gentleman boarding at the house was also found to be similarly gifted, and with such a degree of strength that it was inadvisable for himself and Mrs. Conant to sit at the dinner table at the same time. Whenever such a circumstance occurred the table was violently lifted, or rocked from side to side in a manner suggestive of dining on shipboard in a heavy gale. Therefore when Mr. Conant and his lady drew near the table it was their custom to see if the gentleman

medium was already there, in which case they remained in waiting till he had retired—the same course being adopted by the other party.

The first person who came to test her capacity as a physician, was a medical gentleman from Bridgewater, Mass., who was desirous of settling in his mind, beyond doubt, the verity or falsity of spirit return. He had heard that Dr. Fisher controlled her, and as he had been acquainted with him while in earth life (having been a college classmate of Dr. F.'s) he determined to convince himself as to the correctness of the report. At the close of the sitting—during all of which Mrs. Conant was unconsciously entranced—he told her that he had propounded to the influence speaking, a regular series of questions similar to those put by a medical board to an applicant who desired fellowship as a physician, and that every one had received a correct answer. This fact, together with the giving of various items of information, of which the medium could have had no knowledge, greatly astonished him.

“Are you satisfied?” asked Mrs. Conant.

“I am sure that I have been talking with John Dix Fisher, and nobody else,” he replied.

V.

The astonishing power of penetration possessed by the spirit physician regarding the troubles of those yet in the form was soon evinced in an unexpected manner, and concerning a much dreaded matter. A young lady residing in the same house with Mrs. Conant began to be ill, exhibiting mysterious symptoms, and Mrs. Cates desired the medium to give

her a medical examination. Dr. Fisher, having carefully diagnosed the case through her, declared the patient to be suffering from small-pox in its incipient stage. The inmates of the house became alarmed, and demanded that a *regular* physician should be summoned. Dr. Ayer, who lived not far off, was called in, and gave it as his opinion that the girl had only a bad cold — “he couldn’t help what the ‘dead doctor’ said, it was nonsense to call it small pox.” Dr. Fisher then controlled Mrs. Conant, and sent a message to his medical critic to the following effect: “Tell Dr. Ayer, that in two hours *Nature* will settle the case.” In two hours, as he had predicted, the patient exhibited unmistakeable signs of the disease, and Dr. Ayer was obliged to concur with the unseen practitioner — which he did in a half scornful way, saying with a laugh: “*Of course* the ‘dead doctor’ could see inside a person better than I could.”

Several other instances of the disease came up for consideration in the house, and as she was constantly surrounded by investigators and seekers after medical advice, from 9 o’clock A. M., to sometimes late at night, it became necessary that the small pox patients be removed for the safety of her visitors. When the time arrived for their departure, Dr. Fisher gave orders concerning their transportation, and the measures to be observed for cleansing the house, (which arrangements were implicitly carried out.) He then directed Mrs. Conant to lock her door, and to refuse to allow the lady who was having a sitting at the time he came, to leave until he reported that all was right; alleging that if his requirements were followed no trouble would ensue, and that the disease

should be stayed, as far as this particular dwelling was concerned. Mrs. Conant obeyed with regard to the door, but the lady, after satisfying her curiosity, was very desirous of retiring from the room, and as no word of release came from the spirit physician, the anxiety of the medium increased to perturbation, which was finally dispelled by his writing through her hand that all was well, that the patients had been removed, that he had so prepared the house that the lady could safely go out, and that no one would hereafter be in danger of taking the disease by coming therein. Subsequent events did not disprove the truth of his assertion, although the disease was very prevalent in the neighborhood.

The "dead doctor" was speedily summoned, on account of this success, to treat several patients for this malignant malady. At such times as he made visits to them, he would thoroughly entrance his medium, call at the house in question, make his prescription, and take her home again—she all the while unconscious of what she would have considered her dangerous errand. At one time he thus attended five cases, all of which terminated favorably. In one instance, however, by reason of some unexplained circumstance, he lost control of Mrs. Conant while at the bedside of one of these small pox patients; she, gaining a knowledge of her position, and seized with a deadly fear of contagion, ran home with the utmost speed, Mrs. Cates met her in the hall of the house, exclaiming, "What *is* the matter?" but Mrs. Conant was only able to ejaculate something about "small pox" as she hurriedly sought her apartment. The landlady, who was herself a

medium, followed her to her room, and, after some time, succeeded in magnetizing her so that she became quiet. Dr. Fisher then resumed control of his medium and informed the landlady that there was not the slightest danger of Mrs. Conant's taking the disease herself, or imparting it to others—that she was perfectly shielded from it by the power of her invisible guardians.

VI.

The public reception room of Mrs. Conant, at about this time, began to be the scene of very unique physical manifestations, varied in character as to violence or quiet humor; some of the most important of which are here recorded. The table used for her sittings was of oak, three feet six inches in length, and very heavy. When the company sat around it in the circle, sometimes it would be made so light by the agency of the spirits, that Mrs. Conant could lift it with one hand; at others, the same table was rendered so heavy that four men found it impossible to raise it from the floor. It would frequently—and sometimes without warning, when no séance was being held—be tipped at an angle of 45 deg., while the pens, paper, ink, and other paraphernalia which covered it, would be held in place—not an article falling upon the carpet. The individuals generally composing her circle were finally told that if they had the patience to sit and wait for the manifestation, they should see clearly-defined spirit forms. They announced themselves possessed of a sufficiency of that quality. One evening when a party of six were gathered around the table, the promise was renewed, and all those present became quiet save Mrs.

Conant, who found it impossible to do so by reason of the magnetic draught which was kept up upon her vital powers. The party continued to wait patiently from six P. M., to twelve o'clock, midnight, and at last, as if to reward their faith or persistence, there suddenly appeared behind Mrs. Conant what seemed a fleecy cloud of steam or light smoke, luminous and bright. It rose gradually, expanding itself into a pillar-like form some five feet in height, when it slowly parted, disclosing a human figure, which bowed to them and smiled—the lips moved, but gave forth no sound. The apparition remained in plain sight of all present—including Mrs. Conant, who turned around in order to view it—long enough to be fully cognized as to details of countenance and drapery, and then became enveloped again in mistiness; the cloud of steam or smoke, which before curtained it, closed around it; it sank gradually down to the floor and disappeared. It bore the aspect of a beautiful female, and an enthusiastic member of the company said:

“I feel like imitating the disciples of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, and saying: Let us build two tabernacles—one for the spirit and one for the medium!”

The table then ascended high above the heads of the circle. The company arose and sang the old melody—

“Come holy spirit, heavenly dove,”—

The table keeping time to the music by swaying to and fro. The greater part of the manifestations occurring in presence of Mrs. Conant, took place in a brilliantly illuminated room, but on this occasion the

lights were turned down so as to render objects barely visible—the electric rays furnished by the spirits themselves then completed the illumination so that all forms, such as the above, together with faces, arms, and hands were distinctly apparent.

Another manifestation of a seemingly violent character would often take place: Mrs. Conant would be requested to take her seat upon the top of a small round table—similar to the bouquet stands now in use—and while there the invisible powers would furiously rock the frail support as if to dislodge her, but she was not allowed to fall from it in a single instance. At the close of this manifestation she would frequently be lifted by the spirits in a direct line from the top of the table, and come to the floor, without injury, behind a sofa which was arranged across one corner of the apartment where the séances were held.

VII.

Sometimes the more mischievous order of invisibles—for the experience of the investigator of the present day shows that all classes of minds exist in the unseen world, as here in mortal—would play various pranks at her expense, creating in many cases merriment, and in some a perplexed state of mind. Upon the table in the room where she held her public and private sittings, she had placed a bell, together with a written request, or notice, “Ring!” to those who might enter the apartment in the event of her absence in any other part of the house. This apartment was situated up three flights of stairs from the street, and on numerous occasions, after descending them, the medium would hear a warning note from

the bell, and hastening back would find—no one! This was repeatedly done, when persons were on the watch to see that no mortal was in her room. She would frequently find the door of her apartment locked by the passing of the bolt upon the inside, when she arrived at the top of the stairs, and could not enter till it was unlocked from within, when the closest scrutiny failed to discover any person concealed, and escape was impossible without detection, the great height from the ground precluding egress by the windows, and the door through which *she* passed, being the only avenue by which to safely quit the room. On several occasions, on meeting those who desired sittings, as they ascended the stairs, she would be obliged to inform them that she was locked out—that “the spirits” had possession of her room, and she must wait till they saw fit to open the door. Looks of incredulity would speedily appear on the faces of said investigators, and as soon as the door was unlocked, some of them would spring into the apartment and search vigorously for the person who withdrew the bolt, but always without success.

VIII.

On one occasion a party of seven gentlemen favored her with a call for a séance. They were placed, as usual, around the table in the light, with the medium, and all sat in silence—no manifestations occurring—for half an hour, at the expiration of which time Mrs. Conant, becoming impatient at the long delay, called on Dr. Fisher to know the reason. He immediately took control of her hand and wrote: “If these gentlemen will become honest

investigators, and throw off all their disguise, we will do what we can to give them satisfactory manifestations." This missive she read to them, and they greeted it with laughter, after which they proceeded to remove the various means they had assumed of preserving a physical *incog.*; such as false whiskers, spectacles, etc., etc., and when the transformation scene was completed, she found that she could not recognise a countenance before her as belonging to any of the seven individuals who sat at the table before the edict of the spirit physician was promulgated. They then declared themselves as honest investigators, and Dr. Fisher went on to say: "You will now allow me to introduce you to my medium;" they stoutly declared that they desired no such honor, Mrs. Conant also said she did not wish an introduction, but the incorrigible spirit went on to give their names — correctly in every instance — much to their astonishment. They proved to be some of the "grave and reverend" city fathers, who, desiring to see if any good could come out of the Nazareth of Spiritualism, had chosen the Nicodemian path to that knowledge, but had been (at least so far as the medium was concerned) brought to light despite their disguise.

As the result of their obedience to the conditions required by the spirits — which example it would be well for skeptics, generally, to follow at the present day, instead of endeavoring to block the wheels by unreasoning demands — a most remarkable sitting occurred, and all the manifestations they desired were promptly given. This occurrence made such an impression upon the minds of these gentlemen that they

determined to have additional experience, if possible. They accordingly asked Mrs. Conant if she would give a séance in another house and room — the same to be selected by themselves — they evidently having an idea that by some means unknown to them, her room had been fitted for the performance of the manifestations. She replied that she was willing to try the experiment. Accordingly the gentlemen proceeded to obtain the use of a house then vacant, on Joy Street at the West End of Boston, and fitted one of the parlors temporarily for the sitting. A heavy walnut extension table and a sufficient number of chairs alone composed the furniture of the room or the house. At the appointed time in the afternoon a carriage sent by them conveyed Mrs. Conant and Martha Smith to the designated locality, where all were awaiting their arrival, full of high expectations of “exploding the humbug” as their vigorous vernacular conveyed it. The medium was full of anxiety, and earnestly hoped that if possible, the spirits would accomplish more startling results than usual. She had previous to this séance heard of a negro spirit of great power, calling himself “Big Dick,” who gave the strongest physical manifestations through the mediumship of George A. Redman and others, and she desired Dr. Fisher to secure his services for the occasion. Although he objected at first to her coming *en rapport* with such an influence, he finally consented to remove his opposition, and “Big Dick” made his appearance — through his works at least — producing the most convincing exhibits of invisible force, and performing feats of strength far beyond the united power of the medium and all present. The

gentlemen in attendance desired that the table be lifted to the ceiling, to which the spirit replied in the affirmative, providing Mrs. Conant would sit upon it. She did so, and the table at once began to gradually ascend. Four of the party laid hands on it, and exerted themselves to the utmost to keep it down, but it easily broke from their grasp, and reached the top of the apartment, so that the medium was able to write her name upon the ceiling above her head. All the party then seized the table by its legs, and endeavored to pull it down, but in vain, until Mrs. Conant — who, between the danger of being pressed against the wall overhead by the spirit's exertions to draw it away from the gentlemen, and the peril of slipping from the table to the floor, by reason of the tipping caused by the struggle to draw it down — became alarmed, when the spirit lost control of the heavier body, and the table came crashing to the floor, being somewhat broken by the fall. Mrs. C., however, was not harmed, as she was slowly let down among the ruins of her former seat, and quietly confronted the amazed skeptics, who anticipated for her some severe bodily injury. This circle, occurring like the other, in the full glare of day, seemed to be perfectly satisfactory to the investigators, who, after a playful parley with the spirits as to who should pay for the table, (Dr. Fisher assuring them that they must — which they did) — dissolved the meeting.

At the conclusion of the séance the medium found herself obliged to pay the penalty of overruling the desire of her spirit physician, for "Big Dick" followed her home, very unexpectedly, and, when her husband and herself had retired for the night, com-

menced amusing himself with various antics, which, while they were probably sources of enjoyment for him, did not meet the approbation of the servant girls who were in a room near by, but had not yet fallen asleep. These came rushing *en déshabille* to the landlady, full of fear, declaring that the house was being torn down by the "devil" who was at work in Mrs. Conant's apartment. The confusion continued—tables and chairs were upset, and the bed was violently rocked, upon which Mr. Conant and wife arose, the former (who was not in the least mediumistic) declaring that it was best to be "out of it," and that he meant to see what was the cause of the disturbance.

Mrs. Cates, being admitted, advised Mrs. Conant to summon Dr. Fisher, for an explanation, and they accordingly sat at a table, which they raised from its overturned position on the floor, for the purpose. The spirit physician at once came, recalling to the mind of his medium the fact that he had strongly objected to her coming *en rapport* with "Big Dick," and saying that as she had insisted on doing so, she must abide by the consequences. Finding she must settle the matter herself, the medium at once, on the recommencement of the disturbance (which occurred as soon as Dr. Fisher had retired from control) opened a conversation with the unruly spirit, telling him in a way that appealed to his reason that, on all proper occasions she would be happy to meet with him, but that at the present time he was greatly annoying the occupants of the house, and she would prefer that he depart. He appeared to listen, as any one would while yet in the body, and, at the conclusion of her remonstrance, went away, giving her no further

trouble. That the inmates of the house might see the tangible results of this nocturnal visit, Mrs. Conant allowed everything in her room to remain undisturbed in the position in which the spirit left it (save the table mentioned above) till next day, and morning revealed a most extraordinary state of confusion, as to furniture, in her apartment. "Big Dick" came to her at different times, at subsequent periods, and was so violent that she was often frightened at his exhibitions of strength. She was therefore much gratified when he at length took his final leave of her.

PART III.

REMARKABLE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL
MANIFESTATIONS.



PART III.

“Well done, thou watcher on the lonely tower!
Is the day breaking? dawns the happy hour?
We pine to see it:—tell us, yet again,
If the broad daylight breaks upon the plain?”

“It breaks — it comes — the misty shadows fly; —
A rosy radiance gleams along the sky;
The *mountain* tops reflect it calm and clear;
The *plain* is yet in shade, but day is near.”
— Charles Mackay.

I.

THE writing phase of Mrs. Conant's mediumship now became very strongly marked. She would frequently transcribe the thoughts or desires of two invisibles at the same time—one using her right, the other her left hand. Sometimes while her medical control, Dr. Fisher, was writing out his prescriptions with one, the other hand would be engaged in answering the questions of a visitor; thus indicating that the mind of the medium had not the slightest connection with these dual manifestations of intelligence. Another phase of mediumistic development soon made its appearance in her case, being the power of discerning hidden things, and giving information regarding lost articles. As an instance in point, a gentleman boarding in the house, came one day to the landlady and said:

“Mrs. Cates, I have lost some money from my room; this is the third time it has happened. I want

to know whether the spirits can tell me anything about it."

Advised by Mrs. Cates, he made a visit to Mrs. Conant's room, in the upper part of the house, and asked for a sitting. He was immediately informed, by the influence controlling her hand, that the lost sums could be recovered. "Call the landlady," next directed the spirit. Mrs. Cates was summoned, "Follow the medium" was the written order, and the exploring party of three, set out upon its errand.

"Where am I going?" demanded Mrs. C.

"We will tell you," replied the guides, in whom she had implicit trust. She led the way to the gentleman's room, went up to the bed, which was situated in one corner, wheeled it around, and, stripping back some two yards of the carpet on the floor beneath it, displayed to the astonished eyes of Mrs. Cates and her boarder three rolls of bills there concealed, saying to the gentleman: "There is your money."

"Who put it there?" he asked.

The spirits replied that they would tell him if he would promise to give good advice to the thief, and not deal harshly, but as Jesus would have acted under similar circumstances. This he promised to do, when he was informed that the theft had been accomplished by the chambermaid of the house. The spirits advised Mrs. Cates not to discharge her, and thus throw her into the world with the taint of suspicion fixed upon her character, but to take her to her room and talk to her in such a manner as to dissuade her from the evil course she was pursuing. The lady did as directed, and was rewarded by the penitent expressions of the girl, who acknowledged

that she took the money and concealed it where she thought no one would think of looking for it—intending to go after it when the excitement concerning its loss had subsided; she faithfully promised to avoid such operations in future, and was ever after, an exemplary person—thus, as well as the gentleman, receiving substantial benefit from the mediumistic powers of Mrs. Conant; being turned by the gentle means the spirits counseled from the winding path of duplicity to the fair though rugged road of honesty in all things.

On another occasion, something having been lost in the house, Mrs. Conant was requested to find it. She was led by her invisible friends to the room occupied by the person who had taken it, and immediately charged said individual with the theft, but being met with a stout denial she went up to the bed, and opening it, displayed the stolen article hidden between two mattresses, greatly to the confusion of the abstractor, who evidently supposed the place of concealment to be beyond the probability of human skill to detect. But like others, this individual had forgotten that, as the Apostle to the Gentiles informs us, “We * * * are compassed about with * * * a cloud of witnesses,” though unseen to the eye of the flesh, and was ignorant that the time had come when their celestial voices were proclaiming to earthly media, as of old the Nazarene did to the wondering twelve, “What we tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetop.”

II.

An aunt of Mrs. Cates, Mrs. White, had occasion to visit the house while on a journey from Maine, her native State, but so much afraid was she of "the spirits," and so great a dread did she entertain of the communion so common with them among the members of the household, that she dare not see Mrs. Conant, and used to dart hurriedly past the door of her apartment in going down stairs. The medium greatly desired to persuade the lady to come to her room, as she was satisfied that she possessed a fine organization suited to the production of physical manifestations, though ignorant herself of her powers. She mentioned her desire to the landlady, who shook her head, saying: "Aunt Betsey is too sharp for you." But after some days of waiting, the looked-for opportunity presented itself. The old lady was ascending the stairs, and as she came opposite her door, Mrs. Conant appeared and insisted upon her entering. Not wishing, under the circumstances, to appear impolite, "Aunt Betsey" ventured across the threshold, all the while casting furtive glances around, evidently expecting to see a fearful vision, or to encounter some blood-curdling spiritual monstrosity; but all remaining quiet, she grew reëssured, and took a seat. Mrs. Conant immediately bolted the door to prevent her egress, and then commenced a general conversation upon the city and its mode of life as contrasted with that of the country, gradually turning it upon the question of Spiritualism. Her guest joined in the exchange of views, and as they sat thus, passive to spirit agency, to the astonishment of both, "Aunt

Betsey" —, who was a powerful woman, and a heavy one as well — began to be raised up, till at least a foot above the floor was reached, when she remained suspended in the air.

"Aunt Betsey" exclaimed Mrs. Conant: "what *are* you doing? where are your feet?"

"Oh, child, you have bewitched me," gasped the frightened woman.

"No," replied Mrs. C., "it is done by the power of the spirits."

The lady — whose weight was at least two hundred pounds — remained thus suspended for about a minute, and then descended slowly to the floor. "Aunt Betsey," said the resident medium, "if the spirits can do that, let us see what else they can accomplish. Perhaps they can write for you." The two then sat down at the table, putting their hands upon it, the visitor having previously been supplied by Mrs. C. with a pencil and sheet of paper. The old lady's hand was at once controlled, and a fine message written for Mrs. Conant, signed: "From one of your spirit guides, Prof. John Hubbard," (as previously stated the grandfather of her husband.) All this was accomplished, notwithstanding the fears of "Aunt Betsey," and her opposition to Spiritualism in the abstract.

III.

The mother of Mrs. Cates, who was a regular resident at the house, was an enthusiastic believer in the new gospel of spirit communion. One evening during a visit paid by her to Mrs. Conant, a work basket upon the table was violently hurled to the floor by some invisible agency, and its contents scattered in

confusion around. Grown bold by her familiarity with the various phases of spirit manifestations, the medium immediately commanded :

“Let whoever threw down that basket, pick it up and put it on the table.”

At once the various misplaced articles were taken, one by one, from the floor, and placed in the basket in sight of both ladies — the room being well lighted at the time — and when the task was completed, the basket was returned to the table. Mrs. Conant then demanded the name of the spirit performing the act, and upon its being written through her hand, her visitor exclaimed :

“Why, *I* knew that man !”

“Yes ; I guess you did,” he rejoined. “You owe me half a dollar !”

The old lady protested that she took care of the man in his last sickness, that she did much for him, and that if there *was* any balance in the case it was in her favor, not his. He then began to exhibit considerable violence, disturbing the table and chairs to such a degree that the visitor became much frightened, whereupon the uproarious spirit proceeded to transcribe :

“Pray away, old lady — pray, but God’s asleep ; he don’t hear you !”

The woman’s terror increased, and she acknowledged to Mrs. Conant that she was mentally praying for protection, when he wrote that message to her. She desired to escape from the presence of such a powerful ill-wisher, and so proceeded to think of a movement toward the door. Upon the table rested two lamps, and the candle which she had brought

with her when she entered the room, was also there ; said table continued to rock violently, but as yet, neither had fallen on the floor. Fearing lest the undeveloped spirit, in his evident anger, would precipitate such a catastrophe, the old lady, as she sat by the table seized the lamps in her hands, when her unseen persecutor materialized a spirit hand, and with the quickness of thought threw the candle upon her lap, writing at the same time, through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant :

“ There, old woman, take the candle, too, if you have n’t got light enough ! ”

The hand was distinctly visible to both individuals present. After a season the excitement of the spirit became allayed, and he departed.

During her residence at the house of Mrs. Cates, Mrs. Conant frequently suffered from ill health, but was carefully watched over by her unseen friends, and her every request complied with. On several occasions, when she desired it, a glass of lemonade, placed upon a stand in the room, would be brought to her, held to her lips while she drank, and then replaced. She did not always see the agent who brought it, but could perceive the glass approaching her through the air. The windows would be raised or closed by the invisibles at her desire. She was able, by their assistance, to pass her hand through the flame of a gas jet without experiencing any pain, or receiving a burn ; paper also was treated in the same manner, and came out without even the smell of fire upon it.

With reference to these early manifestations, and also those recorded in subsequent pages, the reader

—skeptical or otherwise—will remember that they are not founded on hearsay evidence, but are transcribed at the dictation of Mrs. Conant herself, and can all be attested by the most credible living witnesses—many of whom, including Mrs. Cates so often referred to, are still residing in Boston and vicinity.

IV.

Mrs. M. A. Pope, who had been previously located at Watertown, Mass., removing to Tileston Street, Boston, was very desirous that Mr. and Mrs. Conant should make a home at her house, which they finally decided to do, going to their new quarters in October, 1855. Nothing of particular interest occurred to diversify the even current of her experiences for sometime after, but one afternoon in the month of December—same year—while she was engaged in giving a sitting for a gentleman, Dr. Fisher took control, saying that he regretted to bring the séance so suddenly to a close, but his medium was needed for another purpose. The gentleman at once left the house, and Mrs. Conant remained in a disturbed state of mind, not knowing what was about to happen. While sitting in her room she heard the door bell violently ring, and though it was not her custom to answer it, yet led by an uncontrollable impression, she hastily obeyed its summons, and met at the threshold a party of men bearing Col. Pope home in their arms. She retained her consciousness long enough to hear that he had met with an accident, by which one of his lower limbs had been fractured, after which Dr. Fisher assumed control of her organism, not quitting his hold for two hours. He first

skillfully examined the wound, pronouncing it a severe one, but was of opinion that he could soon restore the patient, if the parties interested were willing to put the case in his hands. The Colonel and his family expressed a wish that he should undertake the treatment, so the spirit physician continued to work over the broken limb till all was settled for the present, as far as bandaging and preventives to the arising of inflammation were concerned.

A brother of Mr. Pope, who was present, ridiculed the idea that the spirit doctor could be of any service, and announced his intention of sending for a regular physician. Although Mr. and Mrs. Pope declared that such person should not be allowed to interfere now that the limb was dressed, Dr. Fisher told them that a doctor could be sent for if they chose, that others might be satisfied of his skill. Accordingly, the family physician made his appearance, but as soon as he had seen the work of the spirit surgeon he declared that it was well performed, and that there was nothing left for him to do. In the astonishingly short space of three weeks Mr. Pope was able to go out of the house, and was soon after fully restored — experiencing no trouble since from this limb, but finding it in every way in as good condition as before the accident.

The case awakened much interest at the time, an account of it appearing in the Boston "Daily Mail," and people coming from various parts of the State to question concerning the matter for themselves. Not long after his recovery, while Col. Pope was riding in an omnibus on Washington Street, the conversa-

tion among several of the passengers turned upon Spiritualism and the late surgical operation *said* to have been so successfully performed by a "spirit medium." One of the party doubtfully remarked, "I should like to *see* that man whose leg was set by a female spirit medium." Col. Pope immediately replied, "Gentlemen, *I* am the man, and can vouch for the entire truth of the statement." Col. Pope is still alive — residing in Boston — and bears willing testimony to the truth of this account.

Many difficult cases were brought for the consideration of the spirit doctor, after his treatment of the foregoing; the time of his medium was entirely consumed by the demands of patients, and many wonderful cures were wrought by him during Mrs. Conant's residence at the house. Whenever Dr. F. perceived on the morning of any particular day that he was about to have a serious matter presented for examination, he would control his medium, and through her, give orders to Mrs. Pope that she must be exceedingly careful of Mrs. C.'s diet, and give her nothing, till further orders, but plain "gruel" — a provision which was not very agreeable to Mrs. Conant, but seemed to be indispensable for his successful operation through her organism. These directions were implicitly obeyed by Mrs. Pope, whose confidence in Dr. F. was unbounded.

V.

Her invisible guides now gave directions to Mrs. Conant that she must discontinue manual labor in any form; proscribing even her sewing for herself; but she being of an active turn of mind, found it impossible to remain seated, when she *had* a leisure

moment, without some employment to occupy her attention. Among her attendant spirits was an old Indian chief, Wapanaw, who particularly (in his capacity of magnetic adviser) objected to her so doing, giving as a reason, that by wasting her bodily strength in physical labor, she was expending the life force which was necessary for consumption by the spirits in their operations. On one occasion, shortly after the accident just recounted, as she sat sewing upon a black silk dress which she desired soon to complete, this Indian friend continued especially near her, and great was her annoyance at the obstacles which he threw in her way with a view to discouraging her personal efforts to finish it—he desiring her to employ some one else. At the time Col. Pope and his wife were in the room. A skein of silk which Mrs. Conant was using suddenly disappeared, and could not be found, although, vexed at its loss, she continued to search for it for sometime. She then abandoned the chase, and prepared another, saying, “I will hold this fast enough.” Just as she had so expressed herself, Mr. Pope, who was seated on a sofa at the opposite side of the room from her, cried out: “Look over your head.” She did so, and there, suspended by some invisible power, was the missing skein, which was then dropped upon the floor at her feet. The Indian explained that he had abstracted the silk, and held it suspended in the air—at the same time rendering it, by a process known to himself, invisible to their eyes; but that finding her determined to go on with the employment, he thought he might as well return it to her.

This aboriginal friend, on many occasions, proved

his interest in her welfare by endeavoring to minister to her health through the subtle powers of spirit chemistry. The medium was extremely opposed to taking medicine, but, owing to her enfeebled condition, found it absolutely necessary that she should overcome her dislike. While thinking the matter over on a certain evening, she was entranced by Wapanaw, who demanded that Mrs. Pope should bring him a glass of water. When it was before him, he referred to Mrs. Conant's dislike to medicine, and said he would arrange the matter for her; the hand of the entranced medium was then placed over the top of the glass. In a moment or two he declared the water to be sufficiently medicated. On Mrs. Conant recovering from the trance she again complained concerning the disagreeable medicine she was to take on retiring, when she was told by Mrs. P. that all she need do would be to drink the contents of the glass. She partook of the water it contained, with little faith as to its efficacy, but found that its results were identical with the prescription which had been intended for her.

VI.

Samuel Upham, a trance medium, then in ill health and since deceased, called on her one evening in February, 1856, for an examination by Dr. Fisher, with reference to his disease. Hardly had both seated themselves, when the male medium became entranced by the spirit of an Indian chief who gave his name as "White Cloud." Mrs. Conant, most unexpectedly to herself, was immediately controlled by an Indian influence whose love for "White Cloud" was not of that tender sort supposed to rule in the

“happy hunting ground,” and a fierce struggle ensued, each hostile spirit endeavoring to destroy its enemy; the warfare, was, however, of short duration, as the medium of “White Cloud” being much reduced by sickness, was no match for his brisk opponent, and when Mr. and Mrs. Pope rushed into the room, attracted by the uproar, they found the lamps broken, the table overturned, and Mrs. Conant—unconsciously entranced—belaboring the unfortunate Upham with a chair. In all probability he would have been killed—as “White Cloud” still held control of him with true Indian pluck, and would not yield—had not the Colonel and his wife interposed as a rescue. After considerable difficulty they finally succeeded in separating the combatants, and then set about convincing the belligerent chiefs that *they* were dead—that if either killed anybody now it would be one of the mediums who would die, *not* the enemy they desired to destroy. The curious combat then closed, leaving the visitor in a somewhat battered state, while Mrs. Conant was found to have sustained no injury. This manifestation—rather startling, it must be confessed—was but a representative of one of the characteristic phases of undeveloped spirit communion at that early day.

VII.

At the conclusion of one of her sittings at Mrs. Pope’s, a gentleman paid Mrs. Conant her fee with some of the old Spanish silver pieces once quite in vogue, although now out of the currency, in New England. The coins bore such an ancient date that the attention of the medium was immediately called

to them, and she placed them upon the mantel with an idea of keeping them as curiosities ; but while she turned from the shelf to put some coal upon the grate, they disappeared ; she looked incredulously at the place where she had just deposited them, but it was a certainty — they were gone, and she did not hear of their whereabouts for several days, when she recovered her lost property under the following singular circumstances. One of the children of Mrs. Oliver Stearns, who resided at No. 6 Cambridge Street, at the West End of Boston, came to her and said :

“ Mother wants to know if you have lost anything ? ”

“ Yes,” replied Mrs. C. ; “ I have lost some silver pieces, and quite mysteriously, too,” and she proceeded to describe them to the best of her remembrance.

The boy at once took them from his pocket, and related the manner of their being found. An attendant spirit who used to manifest in the presence of one of the Stearns children, and who gave his name as “ Colonel Fiske,” had brought the pistareens to the house of Mrs. Stearns, as an exhibition of his powers, and on leaving them remarked that he had “ stolen ” them from Mrs. Conant, “ when her back was turned,” and had transported them through the air across the city (Mrs. C.’s residence being at the North End) for the benefit of his child-medium. The mother decided to wait a day or two, to discover whether he would take them away again, or if Mrs. C. would send for them ; but finding nothing further was likely to occur, returned them to the rightful owner by the hand of her son. The same spirit, sometime after-

ward, told Mrs. Conant that he tried the experiment in order to see "what she would do about it."

One evening, as Mrs. C. was preparing herself to go out with her husband for a visit, and had stepped into an adjoining room for a moment, she was somewhat annoyed on her return to find that the various paraphernalia indispensable to the female toilet, (brushes, combs, hair pins, etc.,) which were but just now handily arranged for her use upon the dressing table, had disappeared. They could not be found, and she was obliged to apply to Mrs. Pope for aid in the emergency. She then went out for the evening, as previously decided upon, and, on reaching her room and preparing to retire, discovered all the missing articles very carefully wrapped up and hidden in the middle of her bed. So quietly had they been placed there that not a wrinkle or sign of disturbance in the clothing had been left to expose their presence—a thing which would have been exceedingly difficult of accomplishment, had the "hiding" been performed by some mischievous human being, owing to the short time she was absent from the room in the first instance; and it being improbable that any one could have gained access to her room during her visit, as the door was locked and the key in her possession during the entire evening.

VIII.

Time in its course, brings to us great and unexpected changes, which result in the total reërranging of life's plans, or the turning of the current of existence into new and undreamed-of channels. The great world of spirits had earnestly considered the

question of establishing a printed organ for the enunciation of its ideas on earth, which should be ruled by it *in toto*; and the individuals who were to become the pioneers, and subsequently to carry into successful operation the wishes of the invisibles, were being gradually, though insensibly drawn toward each other, as atoms upon the surface of the water, and were soon in a most unexpected manner to become aggregated into working order. Luther Colby, who had for years been connected as a practical printer with the *Boston Post* — a morning paper, at that time, and also at the present, a leading daily in the city — had become satisfied that his “long night” employment was injurious to his physical health, and was preparing to withdraw from it, having, however, no definite plan for the future. He became an investigator of the new philosophy, and, in Nov. 1855, met and became acquainted with Mrs. Conant at a circle held at the residence of Mrs. Stearns — before alluded to — on Cambridge Street. He at once became interested in her as a remarkable medium for the manifestation of spirit power, and recommended her to the attention of William Berry, afterward his partner. In a few days, Mr. Berry came to her, wishing her presence at North Cambridge, Mass., to examine a sick girl there residing. She made the journey, and so pleased were the relatives with the statements made by Dr. Fisher, that they greatly desired that he would treat the case. To this he consented, but told them, in advance, that it was impossible for the young lady to entirely recover; that she would probably live a long while, but would never be restored to sound

health. The lady, in verification of this prediction, continues to this day a hopeless invalid.

IX.

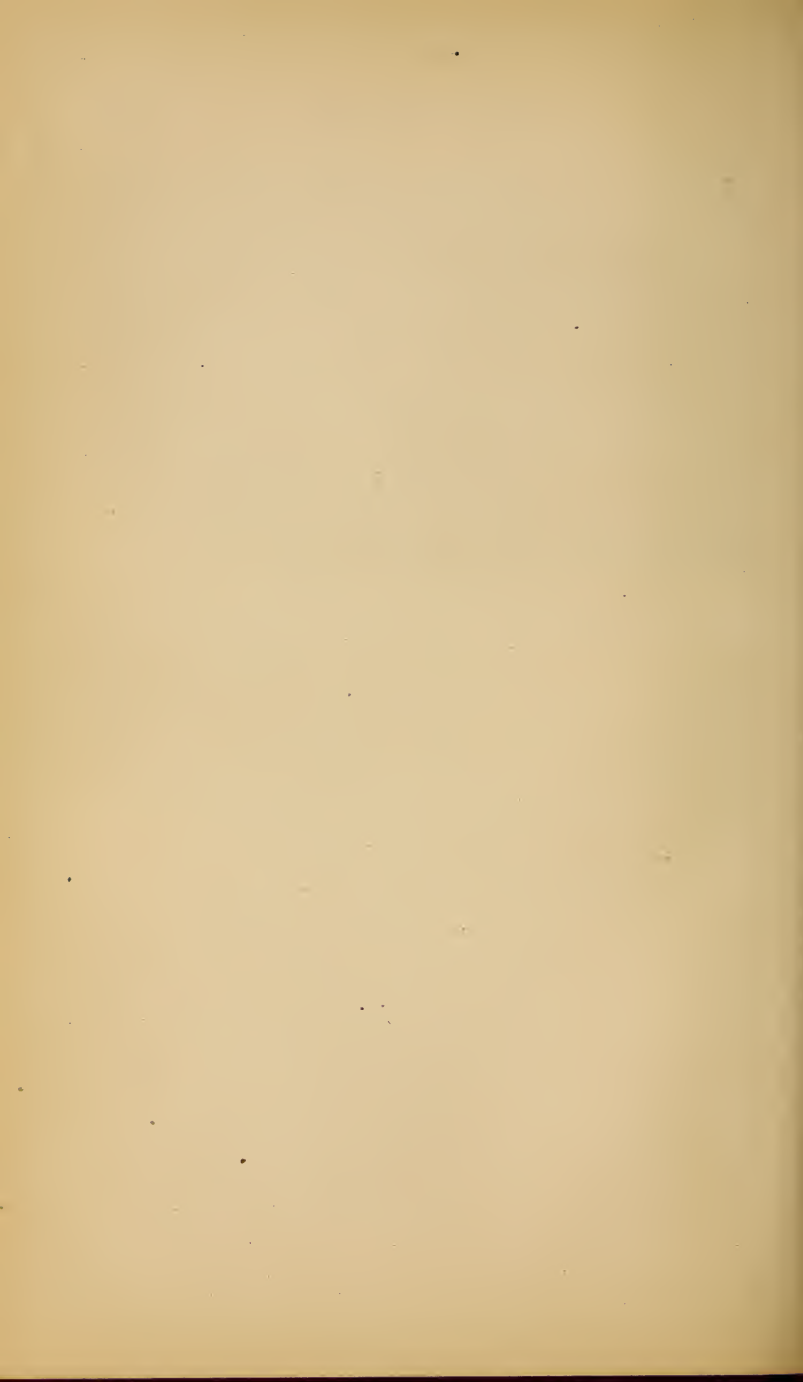
Mr. Berry had been in the habit of holding séances each Wednesday evening at his residence in North Cambridge, having for a medium his brother-in-law, James Ross. But that personage desiring, on account of business relations, to visit the Island of Cuba for a considerable period, Mr. B. was obliged to look around him for some one to fill the vacancy. Instinctively he was led to select the medical medium, whose skillful operations, while controlled, were the subject of so much comment, and, accordingly, sometime after his first visit, made his appearance at the rooms of Mrs. Conant, accompanied by Mr. Colby, for the purpose of engaging her as the regular medium for his investigating circles; to which proposition she agreed. Between twenty and thirty persons generally attended the séances of Mr. Berry at this time, being invited to assist him in tracking to some definite conclusion the mystery which had made its appearance in society. The most startling and wonderful manifestations of spirit power, both in matters physical and mental, were obtained at these weekly meetings, of which a few specimens alone must suffice.

At one of these séances the party desired to know if the spirits could not give them some manifestations in the dark — these meetings being held almost uniformly in the light — and were responded to affirmatively. The full moon shone brightly into the parlor where the assembly was convened, through two long windows, and when the gas was extinguished it

seemed quite light therein; some of the gentlemen therefore suggested putting up blankets as curtains to increase the obscurity; the spirits, however, declared that in that direction they would darken the room to suit themselves. Before long the apartment began to grow dark, gradually at first, as if a cloud obscured the moon, but finally becoming almost that impenetrable blackness of which it is said "it can be felt." Electric lights of large dimensions then appeared in the room, and sounds akin to the discharge of fire arms startled the company. A spirit present, who passed from his bodily form at the battle of Monterey, in Mexico, then announced his intention of giving a representation of that conflict, and distant cannonading, slowly growing more distinct, musketry and many of the dissonant accompaniments of nationalized butchery by which man in a professedly Christian era still murders his brother, were faithfully copied, to the astonishment of all—the phenomenon lasting from fifteen to twenty minutes. During all this exciting sound-panorama Mrs. Conant was entirely conscious, and describes it (as do all those who were in attendance on that occasion) as having even at the present day almost the effect of a terrible reality, rather than something given as an evening entertainment. Soon after the "battle" was ended, Mrs. Conant was entranced, and, when she regained control of her faculties, found herself raised to the top of the table—the chair in which she was sitting, together with herself having been placed there by invisible agency previous to the return of the light—and, in accordance with the rapid transition sometimes witnessed

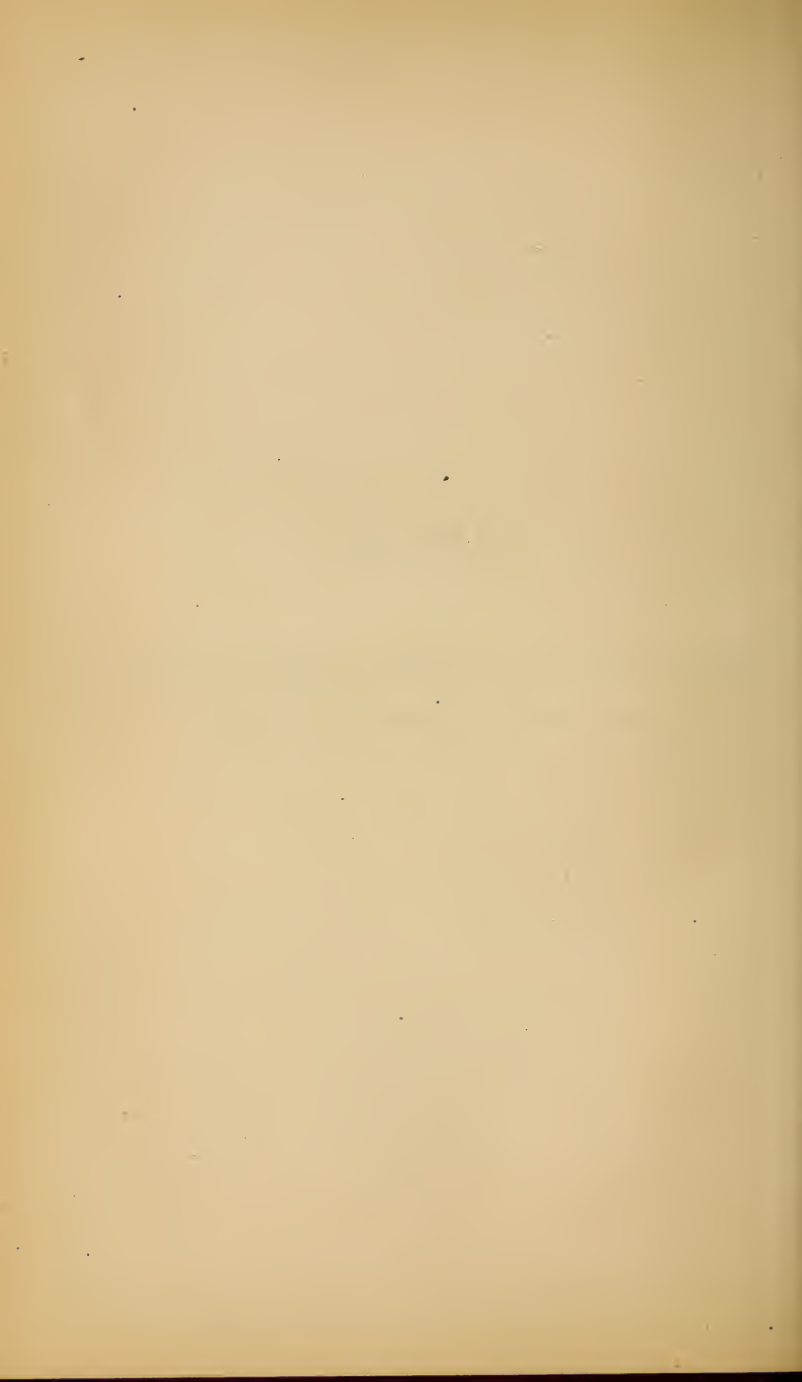
in physical manifestations, from the sublime to the grotesque, smoking a pipe which the influence just controlling had demanded of the laughing company.

Another phase of astonishing power at these circles was shown in the making of predictions concerning future events in the lives of those present, and also in the history of the nation. The late civil war was unerringly foretold, and its length as to time definitely given, also the manner of its termination. These circles were held at Mr. Berry's residence by Mrs. Conant for several months, after which they were discontinued, and those for the *Banner of Light* commenced at the National House, Boston.



PART IV.

SHE IS EMPLOYED BY THE "BANNER OF LIGHT"
AS BUSINESS AND CIRCLE MEDIUM.



PART IV.

“We see but half the causes of our deeds;
Seeking them wholly in the outer world,
Unconscious of the spirit-world which, though
Unseen, is felt, and sows in us the germs
Of pure and world-wide purposes.”

—*James Russell Lowell.*

I.

AND now ensued a remarkable fulfillment of one of her prophecies which at the time of its enunciation was hardly believed to be practicable. As heretofore mentioned, Mr. Berry, after having consulted her with regard to the sick girl in North Cambridge, had visited her again, in company with Mr. Colby, to ascertain whether her medical control was willing she should accept the position of regular medium at his Wednesday evening séances; on that occasion (which was in the winter of 1855,) Dr. Fisher told Mr. Berry that he was soon to change his business; that before long he would commence the publication of a paper in the interests of spirit communion—gave its name as the *Banner of Light*—told him who would be associated with him in business—when he would issue his prospectus, etc., etc.; and all these predictions in time proved true. Mr. Berry went away from the presence of the Doctor deeply

impressed with what had been imparted to him. Certain vague ideas which had been revolving in his mind for sometime, here appeared to take shape, and before long developed into a determination to carry out the project so remarkably traced for him.

The first number of the *Banner of Light* bore date of April 11th, 1857, and was issued by a firm bearing the style of "Luther Colby & Co.," at No. 17 Washington Street, Boston. At the time of its first appearance in the literary world, as is the case with every new venture in the field of periodical literature—especially when the matter to be treated is an advanced thought—the publishers of the *Banner of Light* found the pecuniary hill hard to ascend, and were often much disconcerted at the want of means to carry on satisfactorily the project undertaken; but on such occasions application was immediately made for spirit direction through Mrs. Conant, which never failed to be of the most practical sort when given, and was implicitly followed by them; they were thereby led in safety through the most threatening dangers. The history of the *Banner of Light*, as a bold, honest and unselfish exemplar of the truth of spirit return and communion, is before the world, and can speak always for itself: The object of the present volume is to trace the life-line of Mrs. Conant as it winds, in accordance with circumstances, across the pathway of that journal's existence.

While Mr. Berry, as business manager, remained quiescent and obedient, like Paul of old, to "the heavenly vision," all went well; but finally questions of policy arose in which he entertained a different belief from his spiritual advisers through Mrs. Conant,

and the breach rapidly widened till he almost bade them defiance, and declared his intention of publishing the paper to suit himself. With a hope of influencing his powerfully materialistic mind, his own guardian band of spirits sent a fearless, determined disembodied intelligence, who gave his name as William Jeffreys, *alias* Captain (Pirate) Gibbs, to reason with him upon the plane of thought which was the most natural to both—Mr. Berry being, like the sailor, of a bold and dashing temperament which allowed no opposition to daunt him in the carrying out of his projects. But the arguments, and, afterward, threats of Capt. Gibbs, could not influence the positive mind he had to combat, and he finally told Mr. Berry that under the circumstances nothing more could be done with him, but that in less than two years he would shake hands with him on the spirit side of life. The civil war in time broke out, and Mr. Berry, after some preliminary movements, embarked on its sanguinary flood, became a First Lieutenant in the Salem Sharp Shooter Corps, and fell bravely fighting at the head of his company at the battle of Antietam, Md., September 17th, 1862.

II.

As this powerful invisible intelligence, Capt. Gibbs, has been of much service and assistance to Mrs. Conant, a few examples of his foresight and skill will not be out of place in this connection, though the instances cited occurred later in her experience. He was, at his first coming, very violent in his manifestations, and decidedly dangerous as to his intentions, having on one or two occasions seemingly

attempted the life of the medium. He desired to have supreme control of her himself, and was thrown into ungovernable rage by the refusal both of herself and her guardian spirits to allow it. Finally, however, he appeared to grow calmer, and made a proposition to Mrs. Conant that if she would undertake a journey to New York city for him upon some business in which he was deeply interested, he would see her safely there, protect her in returning, and would ever after be a constant and helpful attendant, granting any reasonable request which she might make of him. She consulted with some of her friends, and, as they counseled the acceptance of the offer, she started for New York, in company with Mr. Berry, in the month of February, 1860. On arriving there, she repaired to a hotel—the Brandreth House—and, upon establishing herself therein, asked her invisible traveling companion what she was to do next:

“Bring me writing materials, and I will show you what I want,” was his reply.

She arranged the paper, and he proceeded to control her hand, writing a letter to a gentleman, an entire stranger to her, and whose name and address—which latter was somewhere on Broadway—she seemed immediately to forget as soon as the missive was despatched, requesting him to meet a friend at a certain room in the house in question at a specified hour of the day. This letter was sent to its destination by the aid of one of the hotel boys, and in two hours after, the stranger arrived, thoroughly puzzled as to whom to expect, and not knowing even the sex of the party who was desirous of seeing him. The number of the room was no guide to him, for in look-

ing at the register he found it to be occupied by a lady, while, by the handwriting of the letter, he had been led to expect a gentleman. He, however, decided to call upon said lady and see what was the meaning of the strange procedure. Reaching the room he inquired what was the business on which he was summoned. Mrs. Conant was confused, and at loss for a reply, whereupon Captain Gibbs proceeded to entrance her, and to explain the circumstances which had led to his calling on him. The nature of the matter which seemed so important to Gibbs, his medium never knew, though the gentleman seemed much interested when she returned to consciousness, and expressed himself as fully satisfied, both of the identity of the Captain, and concerning the business treated of by him. The promise of the spirit, as regards being her friend in future, was kept in a remarkable degree, and Mrs. Conant had no occasion to regret her unexplained journey.

The day on which she embarked for her return to Boston was fine, and not a cloud was to be seen. Meeting the Captain as he walked through the cabin of the Sound steamer as evening was closing in, she asked if he anticipated a pleasant passage; to which he replied that the night promised to be as pleasant as any he had met with in the course of a long experience.

“Well, Captain,” returned the medium, “there will be a storm before midnight; you’ll be obliged to anchor before 10 o’clock.”

“I have been on this Sound,” said the Captain, “for twenty-three years, and have rarely been mistaken about the weather; if I am now, it will be very remarkable.”

So they parted — she foretelling a conflict of the elements, and the professional sailor predicting a fair and prosperous voyage. Beginning to feel sick soon after, she sought her state-room, and fell into a fitful slumber, from which she was finally aroused by a hurried tramping overhead, the blowing of the whistle, ringing of engine bells, shouts and commands, the rattling of chains, and other signs which usually accompany a nautical disturbance. Hastily arising, and keeping her feet by clinging to the door — for the boat was rolling heavily — she demanded of the stewardess what had happened.

“Oh!” answered that functionary; “it’s a heavy storm of snow and wind, and it is n’t safe to run any longer on account of the other boats; so we’re coming to anchor.”

“What time is it?” asked Mrs Conant.

“Ten minutes of ten,” said the stewardess.

The medium, now fully awake, remembered the prophecy she was impelled to make to the Captain, and saw that it had proved correct.* Her fears immediately assumed the ascendancy, and sitting down as best she could, with paper and pencil, she asked Captain Gibbs what was to be the result. He at once wrote —

“Don’t trouble yourself, I will take care of this matter, and bring you home in safety.”

When the daylight came, three steamers were found anchored near them, but so thick had been the snow in the atmosphere that neither of the pilots had been able to see the other boats, and the escape from a collision was almost miraculous. The Captain sought for his remarkably weather-wise passenger, and de-

sired to know by what means she had been enabled to foretell the approaching tempest.

"That is a secret," was her playful response.

"I would give something for that secret," rejoined the son of Neptune.

"Why, then, I am a spirit medium! Capt. Gibbs, an old sailor, now dead, told me of the danger, on coming on board, and also promised to protect me."

"Indeed," said the Captain. "You would be a fine passenger to have on board ship during a long voyage—better than a barometer. This has been the worst storm I have seen on the Sound. The Steamboat Company ought to carry you *gratis*. I will give you a free pass whenever you desire to visit New York."

On another occasion, in the month of May, 1860, on going on board a steamer in New London bound for New York city, in company with Mr. Berry, Mrs. Conant entered the cabin, and looking around, perceived several buckets—empty at the time—and asked why they were kept there. Mr. Berry informed her that they were intended as aids in extinguishing fire, should the boat be subject to such an accident.

"Why are they not filled, then?"

"Because the officers probably think there is no fear of fire, and so they are not attended to."

"Well," retorted the medium, "they had better be filled to-night."

Mr. Berry became so impressed with the sense of coming danger, portrayed in her words, that he hastened to the Captain of the boat with a warning. That officer was not one of those who resent advice

even when given in all kindness, and he had the necessary precautions against fire observed, not only in the cabin but throughout his vessel. About midnight fire was discovered near the engine room, which would, in all probability, have proved fatal to the boat, if not to all on board, had not everything been in preparation to subdue it. As it was, the threatened conflagration was instantly stayed. The Captain met Mr. Berry on deck just before reaching New York, and was anxious to know how the fire had been foreseen; and when informed that it had been spoken of by a lady passenger who was a spirit medium, he desired to be presented to her, and expressed his wish to know more about Spiritualism, if the "invisibles" could "do as well as that." This again was the work of the guardian, Capt. Gibbs, who, foreseeing the emergency, had impressed her to utter the words which had caused the successful preparations to be made.

III.

Those acquainted with the peculiar delicacy of magnetic laws, know the subtle effect which persons of a certain given temperament bring to bear upon others possessed of one negative to or susceptible of approach by them. Shortly after her acquaintance with Mr. Gibbs, a lady whom she frequently met, began to exercise a power upon her which seemed to sap the fountains of her vitality, bringing on that fearful sensation of "death in life" which so many media have experienced, to their cost. Wherever Mrs. Conant appeared, at circles, parties, or elsewhere, this magnetic vampyre seemed attracted, and came

also, until it appeared as if her physical decease would ensue. In this emergency, Mrs. C. was fain to call upon her constant though unseen friend :

“Capt. Gibbs—help me,” she earnestly asked.

“Yes,” was his answer ; “leave her to me.”

“But what will you do ?” she demanded, remembering his former violence of manifestation toward herself.

“Kill her, if necessary,” was his rejoinder. He shortly afterward came and wrote :

“You will be no longer troubled.” As he predicted, the lady soon after ceased to come where Mrs. Conant was, and never afterward annoyed the medium by her disturbing presence.

The friendly understanding between Gibbs (or Jeffreys) and Mrs. Conant has remained unbroken to the present day. He has assisted her in many ways—not the least remarkable in the pecuniary point of view, when she needed such help, by impressing persons to pay arrears or advance her the amount required ; he has also given her strength in hours of sickness and prostration.

In the Spring of 1856, herself and husband removed their place of abode from Mrs. Pope’s, and went to live at the house of Mr. Berry, in North Cambridge. Dr. Fisher recommended a change for her, but she murmured, saying that she did not know where to go ; that Mr. Berry had offered to board herself and husband, but she was not yet ready to leave her present home. She finally demanded of her spirit adviser a test which should prove conclusively to her that it was really himself, and not another intelligence, who was thus counseling her. In reply he directed her

to visit Mrs. Hayden, a medium in Hayward Place, Boston, and see what she had to say. She obeyed, and as soon as she entered the room loud raps began all around her. Mrs. Hayden said: "You have brought some powerful spirit with you." The parties then took their seats at the table, and the raps continued. Mrs. Hayden, without the slightest knowledge concerning the purpose of her visitor, took up a pencil, and at once the name, "John Dix Fisher," was mechanically traced on the paper, after which he (for it was the Doctor) wrote out the same message he had previously transcribed through Mrs. Conant's hand at her own residence. His medium was then satisfied of his identity, and said, quietly: "All right — I will go."

Her removal into the suburbs rendered it necessary that she should have some central location in Boston, in which, during the day, to answer the demands of her rapidly increasing mediumistic business; and such a *desideratum* did not immediately present itself. In fact, she searched for some time, and was beginning to be discouraged, although Dr. Fisher had previously told her that she should have an office on Washington Street. Finally, despairing of success, she visited a lady who hired rooms in a building — the old Andrews estate — on Washington Street, corner of Central Court, (an edifice now extinct, it having given place to the march of improvement;) and was informed by her that there was not a vacant room in the house suitable for her purpose, but that the landlord, Mr. Drury, had a fine little office just around the corner, up one flight, which he seldom made use of, and perhaps he could be prevailed upon

to give it up. Calling on him the next day, he said there was no fitting place in the building for the purpose she desired, and upon her reminding him of the office, was of the opinion that she would not like it when she had visited it. On being ushered into the apartment the medium declared that she would make it do, if he would consent to relinquish it. After taking a day to consider the subject, the landlord rendered his consent, the room was refitted and furnished, and she commenced her sittings therein, remaining as a tenant for something more than a year—many of the most remarkable phenomenal manifestations of spirit power occurring there in her presence.

The landlord informed her that when warm weather set in she would find the little room uncomfortable:

“I do n’t see how you will get along with it,” was his cheering assurance.

“I shall be obliged to engage the spirits to keep it cool,” replied Mrs. C.

She accordingly requested aid from Dr. Fisher in this regard, and he promised her that she should have no trouble concerning the heat. The engagement was faithfully kept, as the landlord himself fully acknowledged when entering the office on a close and sultry day in July, he was forced to exclaim with surprise:

“How cool you have it here—this is the most comfortable place I’ve visited to-day. What does it mean?”

“Let us sit down at the table, and see,” answered Mrs. Conant.

She then asked Dr. Fisher if he had anything to

do with the atmosphere of the room, upon which he wrote in the affirmative, and followed the declaration with quite a lengthy message, giving the *modus operandi* by which, through the introduction of certain electric forces, and the ejection of certain magnetic ones the temperature of the room was kept at its agreeably low degree, notwithstanding the heat outside. He also stated that it was within the power of the spirits operating about the room, to increase or diminish the temperature therein at will.

Among her patrons at this office was Mr. Charles Bruce, of Cambridgeport, who on many occasions, at private séances, brought fruit of various kinds for the invisibles communicating; on his holding out a specimen, and asking if they would take it, his request would be complied with at once, while both Mrs. Conant's hands were upon the table, and plainly to be discerned by her visitor—the manifestation taking place in the light. Sometimes, a knife being given them beneath the table, the spirits would pare the fruit—the noise of the operation being clearly heard, and the peel falling to the carpet. Again the remnants of an apple—the substance of which had been consumed—(sounds being heard as of eating, although no mortal person save themselves was in the room) would be thrown to the floor, bearing the marks of invisible teeth. This took place repeatedly in the presence of Mrs. Conant as medium, and Mr. Bruce as investigator, at their sittings.

A remarkable case of what is called “the double” occurred at one of her private séances at this place. A gentleman whom she had been in the habit of

sitting for quite frequently, called on her one day and scarcely had they taken seats at the table when a name was written through the hand of Mrs. C. The visitor started back in surprise, ejaculating :

“That can’t be! there must certainly be some mistake!” But the spirit only replied by re-writing the name.

“When did you die?” queried the gentleman.

“Yesterday; in Middlebury, Vt. I was a teller in the Middlebury Bank.”

The visitor, filled with astonishment, in which was mingled an undertone of doubt, proceeded to press the spirit with test questions upon personal matters, of which he was satisfied the medium could not possibly have any knowledge. All these were correctly answered. Utterly at a loss to account for what he heard, the inquirer informed Mrs. C. that he had left Middlebury that very morning, at which time the person now announcing himself as dead, was in perfect health. The medium, being unable to throw any light upon the subject, he repaired for information to the telegraph office, where his Vermont friend, in reply to his anxious query, flashed back a statement that as far as he knew he was alive and well. On his return to Mrs. Conant’s office, the gentleman stated that he was even more mystified than before, as the matters treated on by his questions, and correctly answered by the influence purporting to be his friend, were of a nature to be beyond the knowledge of a third party.

In the winter of 1855-6, owing to the nearly equal balance existing between the two great parties of the

day, in the United States House of Representatives, no election of Speaker could be effected for that body for a space of nearly eight weeks. Day after day the House assembled, and the form of balloting was gone through with, but the result "no choice," was all that could be despatched to the waiting ones all over the nation. The excitement gradually reached such a height that knots of interested politicians began to visit Mrs. Conant at the residence of Mr. Pope, desiring to consult "the spirits" as to the prospects of their particular favorites. At last a challenge appeared in one of the city papers, offering five hundred dollars to any spirit medium who should successfully predict the coming Speaker. This challenge she accepted, and, in accordance with its provisions, three gentlemen called at her office, announcing themselves as ready for a séance. She was entranced, and the spirit controlling (who gave his name as Henry Clay) assured them that Nathaniel P. Banks, member from Massachusetts, would be the one selected to preside. It so happened that all the gentlemen present were opposed in politics to Mr. Banks, and they stoutly denied the likelihood of such an occurrence. But the spirit refused to reconsider his announcement, although the gentlemen continued to come to her room day after day, to see if the unseen intelligence would offer any change of statement. His reply was invariably: "Banks will be the next Speaker." At length, on the very day on which the news of his election was telegraphed to Boston, they called and remained two hours, patiently awaiting, but in vain, some indication of spirit presence. The medium be-

gan to be nervous, and wondered what could be the cause of the delay, while she urged them to continue their stay till they received a message of *some* sort. The influence finally controlled, declaring positively that Banks *was* elected Speaker of the House. The gentlemen again united in protesting that it was impossible, and one of them volunteered to go to the *Transcript* office to see if any later despatches were in receipt from Washington. On his return, he said there was some mistake—that no news had been received; this, however, turned out afterward to be an untruth, as the information was even then becoming public. The spirit, however, would not yield his ground. After another hour of suspense, nothing further transpiring, the gentlemen took their leave for the day. She at once prepared herself to go home, and starting therefor, almost the first sound that greeted her ear on passing into the street, was the cry of a news-boy, announcing:

“Here’s the *Journal*, *Traveller*, and *Transcript*! N. P. Banks elected Speaker!!”

Nothing further was heard from the three gentlemen (?) politicians or their five hundred dollars.

IV.

In the winter of 1856, she left Mr. Berry's residence at North Cambridge, and, with her husband, boarded at the National House, Haymarket Square, Boston, at that time kept by Mical Tubbs. Here those manifestations which have been the wonder of doubter and believer alike; followed her. The cures, also, performed by Dr. Fisher, were remarkable in character. Among his patients was Mr. Tubbs, the landlord. So powerful were the remedies prepared under direction of Dr. F., that he warned Mrs. Tubbs that the administration of one drop too much, would be likely to "send her husband to the other side of life in less than half an hour." His skeptical friends became alarmed, and said to Mrs. Tubbs:

"Why! you surely do not intend giving him that medicine?"

"Certainly," was her answer; "I shall follow Dr. Fisher's directions with regard to it."

Mrs. Conant was in the room when the first potion was given; the patient soon complained that he could not see, and that his sense of hearing appeared to be failing; he remained in this condition for several minutes, after which he became insensible. Great anxiety supervened in the minds of all concerned, but the result indicated that this state was exactly what Dr. F. desired to produce, for when the patient regained the use of his faculties—which happened after a brief period—he began a successful journey toward renewed health.

Mrs. Tubbs next yielded to the approach of disease,

her special trouble being rheumatic fever; so severe was the attack, that at its height but little hope was entertained of her recovery. Dr. Fisher attended her through all her sufferings, and though several physicians in the form, who called to see her, said that if the "dead doctor" brought her out safely "he would be smart," he finally was the instrument of the Higher Power to restore her again to life and usefulness.

Another striking instance of Dr. F.'s curative capacity, as exhibited through the organism of Mrs. Conant (which occurred some time after) is evidenced in the experience of a gentleman—a member of the Massachusetts Legislature, (which was then in session)—who was brought to her for treatment by Mr. Tubbs. Paralytic tendencies existed in his case—his head trembling and moving from side to side. Dr. Fisher prescribed for him, after looking thoroughly into the causes of the complaint, and was more than usually particular in his directions regarding the remedies he prescribed. He ordered the medium to be very careful in copying the recipe for the druggist from his own hand-writing—which was not very plain—in order that no mistake might arise; and by his request she read the prescriptions aloud in the hearing of the patient and the spirit physician—the one declaring that he perfectly understood the matter, the other (by writing) that his ingredients and the proportions thereof had been correctly recorded. One portion of the prescription was intended for external, the other for internal use. The case continued with favorable symptoms till the third day, when by some mistake the gentleman on

going to the State House put into his pocket the bottle containing the external remedy — which had previously been explained to him by the spirit doctor as containing an active poison — and did not discover his error till he had swallowed a sufficiency to throw him into violent spasms. He was apparently dying, and had only strength enough left to tell where he obtained the preparation. Several of his friends, full of blended indignation and fear, started in search of Mrs. Conant. On their finding her, Dr. Fisher speedily controlled, and, after writing a prescription to neutralize the poison, exclaimed to them:

“Don’t stand here talking! go and get this put up — give it to the patient as soon as possible; he will live, if you return to him in any decent season.”

On their arrival with the remedy aforesaid, they found the sick man dead, to all appearances, the physicians who had been summoned in the interval of their absence considering him beyond the reach of medicine; but on the administering of the counter-agent ordered by Dr. F., he began to show signs of life, and was removed to his lodgings. When he was sufficiently strong to make the effort, he called on Mrs. Conant at the hotel to express his regrets at having, by his own mistake, caused her so much anxiety and trouble. With him came two physicians who had witnessed his case, and were desirous of seeing the person who made the prescription — they declaring that no such preparation should be used — that “whoever ordered it was deficient of a knowledge of the *materia medica*,” etc., etc. The spirit physician, controlling, soon proved to them that as to curative remedies he was in his element,

his knowledge in this respect being superior to their own. Thus the case, which at first threatened such serious consequences, resulted in establishing yet more firmly the reputation of Dr. F. and his medium.

V.

The *Banner of Light* being brought before the material and mental world through the efforts of its energetic publishers, and conducted by the agency of the spiritual, through the organism of Mrs. Conant, they inaugurated during the summer of 1857, at Room 22, National House, a series of circles preliminary to those which in after years have become so prominent a feature of that journal. At first—in his ignorance of the laws of spirit communion (in common with the great body of the spiritualistic believers of that date) — Mr. Berry conceived the idea that the séances must be held strictly in private, only himself and Mrs. C., being at the table, with now and then a mutual friend, (Willard Wheeler) introduced by way of experiment; but finally, at the suggestion of Mr. Colby, a certain number of visitors—to act as a “battery” for the furnishing of magnetic supplies to the medium—were regularly brought in. These small circles of three or four persons, prepared the way in time for an increase of numbers, which continued till the room became too small, and Mr. B. was directed by the spirits to prepare another, for the better accommodation of the audiences assembling. He, therefore, in the spring of 1858, fitted a room at the (then) office of the *Banner of Light* situated at 3½ Brattle Street, Boston.

Mr. Berry was for a long while his own reporter—

writing down whatever came from the invisibles for reference or publication as the case might be. Previous to the establishment of the Circle Room at 3½ Brattle Street, Mrs. Conant had become so thoroughly depleted of vital force, by reason of her ministrations, that the only way in which communications could be given through her by the invisibles was by their bringing her into a profound slumber, and then writing mechanically through her hand — Mr. Berry moving the paper as fast as it became necessary.

To give, in a brief space, to those minds unacquainted with the conditions necessary for successful spirit control, an idea of what is termed a “battery” in circles held for such communion, it will be necessary, at the outset to lay down as a postulate the declaration of Paul the Apostle, that “there *is* a natural body, and there *is* a spiritual body,” and that the two are conjoined in every human being. Experience proves that the one or the other is in the ascendant very strongly with certain classes of people, while in others the one blends into its opposite so gradually, that as has been said of the color on the neck of the dove, we may not trace where it ends. In regard to these classes it is not now necessary to speak of the varied shading of the middle ground, but rather to exhibit to the view of the investigator the extremes — those in which the one order of qualities predominates largely over the other. Experience goes to show that the man (or woman) in whom the physical nature greatly preponderates, is given to matters more nearly related to the plane of the senses and seeks pleasure in things fleeting, temporal, and transitory, rather than those which are solid and

abiding. The health of such, when not corroded by indulgence, is generally robust, and the fleshly tenement strong, though not particularly delicate in texture, the finer qualities of the inner nature being apparently prisoners, and powerless to wake the individual from the semi-trance of materiality in which he or she is plunged. This class may be ranked as the positives, or anti-mediumistics. Those in whom the powers of the spiritual body greatly predominate, by any reason, over flesh and sense, have in all ages been gifted with visions, impressions, the power of prophecy, etc. They may be termed the negatives or mediumistics. They are generally of a nervous or an excitable habit, not physically strong, but tending rather to delicacy of development, and, in the majority of cases, to weakness of the fleshly covering. These persons, like the sensitive plate of the photographer, which records impressions, even when involuntarily exposed to the light, are being constantly acted upon, or "influenced" by those who, though their physical bodies have been removed by death, yet live on as immortal entities by virtue of the "spiritual body" heretofore enumerated in Paul's compend of humanity. The modes of influencing or manifesting through a physical body by a spirit foreign to it are various, consisting of all grades of possession, from the unconscious trance, in which the subject knows nothing of what is said, to the light breath of recognized inspiration flowing in upon the corona like the night breeze over the wind harp, and drawing forth the music of genius, which some one has beautifully described as the "great joy of the soul at the discovery of some new truth."

Now the power by which these sensitives are controlled by spirits foreign to their bodies is *not* brought by said spirits from some other sphere of life, but is of a material nature, and must be derived from the natural and spiritual body of the sensitive or medium. It is that mysterious vital force which the body gains when sleeping and expends while it is awake — the fuel which produces the propelling vapor for the great engine of life. Hence if the draught of strength from the medium is too great, as in the case of the engine when the fuel is too rapidly consumed, more must be obtained from some source ; therefore other persons — but not necessarily mediums — must be brought within reach of the controlling intelligence, that it may be able, as it were, to extend its grasp, and draw this force from them to assist it in operating through the machinery, both physical and mental, with which it is temporarily connected. This assemblage of persons, whether joined in a circle or distributed in a hall as an audience, is termed a “battery,” from which magnetic life is obtained to sustain the failing powers of the medium under influence.

PART V.

THE "BANNER OF LIGHT" FREE CIRCLES. — HER
LABORS AS A PUBLIC SPEAKER.



PART V.

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do *know*, and testify that we *have seen*; and ye receive not our witness.—JOHN III., 11.

1.

The first public free circle held at the office of the *Banner of Light*, 3½ Brattle Street, Boston, as per previous date, was well attended, and the audiences continued steadily to increase from the opening of the room. At first the manifestations of spirit intelligence, and the management of the circles for the same, were not as quietly ordered, or systematically arranged as afterward. It required practice for Mr. Berry and his unseen coadjutors to perceive the proper conditions to be observed on either end of the telegraphic wires. Mr. Berry, on his part, would often allow persons to enter the room, or retire, while the séance was going on, thus submitting the medium to the severest shocks, and almost unfitting her to continue. As one instance of the effect of this method of operation, both upon Mrs. Conant and the sensitives who were selected and bound together as one by the spirit world for the carrying out of its purposes regarding the *Banner of Light*, the following incident is recorded: At one

of these early séances, the circle room being crowded, a lady in passing the medium, placed her hand upon her (Mrs. C.'s) shoulder to preserve her balance, and immediately the spirit controlling lost possession, and the nicely adjusted magnetic surroundings were so thoroughly disturbed that no further manifestations could be obtained during the afternoon, although the medium and audience sat for sometime longer in a passive condition with a hope of reëstablishing the necessary harmony. On the afternoon in question, Luther Colby — who in his capacity of editor-in-chief was at work in his office, situated one flight above the circle room — became aware of a very disturbed magnetic condition around him, so much so that, unable to proceed with his vocation, and certain that something unpleasant had happened down stairs, he descended hastily to the business office where he met his partner, Mr. Berry, who had just left the circle room.

“What have you been doing this afternoon?” he queried.

“Nothing,” said Mr. Berry, “on account of an accidental disturbance,” the particulars of which he then related as above.

The spiritual end of the telegraph was at this time scarcely better managed. No superintending spirit (or spirits) seemed appointed to hold command of the approaches to the mediumistic machine, so that often disorderly intelligences would crowd out the peacefully inclined, and take possession of Mrs. Conant, demonstrating their natural tendencies by various acts of violence.

The messages which were given through Mrs.

Conant during the first six months of her ministrations at these circles—and written down by Mr. Berry as she spoke them—were afterward rigidly tested by the firm writing to the relatives mentioned, examining town records, visiting, when practicable, in person, the friends or acquaintances of the communicating parties, etc., and not one was inserted in the paper till it was found correct by mundane evidence. Those which could not be immediately analyzed and endorsed were put on file for future reference. Finally the medium, being prostrated by sickness, the supply of messages which had been tested as reliable became exhausted before her recovery, and Mr. Berry called on her to see what should be done. He said that as the others had been found to be true, the idea presented itself to his mind that he had better run the residue (though not yet pronounced correct) through the press. She advised him to follow his impression, saying that her object was to get at the truth, in common with the mass of investigators, and that if false messages had been or were being given through her, she would like to have the fact settled beyond dispute. These filed communications were then given to the public through the columns of the *Banner of Light*. As they were in a great measure from persons residing in foreign countries, or in distant parts of the United States, the process of testing them was not as practicable as in the case of the former class already published, but in time many of them were proved to be perfectly correct. The faith both of the medium and her associates became stronger at this demonstration of reliability, and afterward the messages were unques-

tioningly printed without preliminary examination. To gain an adequate conception of the strong claim for credence and belief set up by the message department of the *Banner*, it is only necessary to examine the files of that paper from its earlier issues to the present hour. The skeptical reader will be astonished at the mass of testimony furnished there in letters received, through the mails from entire strangers, in all parts of the country, acknowledging the truthfulness of the communications. These living verifications of the "letters of the dead," if published would of themselves make a large volume.

At the commencement of these public circles, they were held each day of the week save the Sabbath, and continued, generally speaking, from 3 to 6 o'clock P. M. ; but the length of time occupied at each séance gradually became shortened, and finally the number of days was limited—as under the present arrangement—to three; Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday afternoons, commencing at 3 o'clock and continuing, as an average, about an hour. So thoroughly have the various departments, spiritual and terrestrial, become systematized, that as much matter is now given in the three hours per week of the present, as was obtained in the six periods of three hours each during the old style. One great cause of the length of the early séances was the loss of time. The medium would nearly always be allowed to come fully out of the trance state when each influence left her, thereby necessitating the lapse of some ten minutes or more for the next spirit, desiring to speak, to obtain control; but under the present arrangement she is hardly conscious of anything transpiring from the

time she takes her seat at the circle table, to the hour when she retires from it. On such days as the circles are held, at about 9 o'clock in the morning, the spirits conducting the circles generally commence slightly influencing her; she therefore does not allow herself at such times to see company, but passes the period before the convening of the séance in quiet retirement.

One remarkable feature in her experience with regard to the giving of these messages, is the consciousness she sometimes feels of possessing a double self-hood. She can see her physical form in one portion of the room, while her spirit is in an entirely different part of it, causing the thought to flash upon her—"Why! there are two of us!" But as an ordinary rule her spirit wanders from the room, and visits other scenes and countries.

An English gentleman who was present at a séance at Huddersfield, records that she manifested as a spirit there, unmistakeably, through a medium who had no knowledge of her; and on a report of the questions asked her and answers received in return, being forwarded her by the said gentleman, she found the replies attributed to her to be identical with those she would have given if interrogated on those points while in a normal condition.

On another occasion, a gentleman came in from Roxbury (now a part of Boston under the name of the Highland District, but then a separate corporation) and said he was in the habit of having weekly circles at his house, and that at the one held on the evening previous, she (Mrs. C.) had given himself and all present a surprise. Upon her inquiring as to

how that could be when she was at home at that time, he replied: "You came to our séance in spirit last night, and every one thought, by the correctness of your personation and the directness of your answers to our queries, that you had passed away; so I came here to see." Both these strange occurrences took place in the year 1859.

II.

The great unpopularity of Spiritualism in its opening days — which, thanks to increased knowledge among men is gradually wearing away — caused much trouble to be made by the relatives of those communicating through Mrs. Conant, concerning the publication of their messages to the world. Those who felt specially aggrieved, frequently called in ruffled mood upon Mr. Berry, but gained no comfort from that gentleman, as he assured them, that whatever came as a message through the medium which was within the bounds of reason, he should most certainly publish. Among the individuals most indignant, was a gentleman in Cambridgeport, whose son having passed on, shortly afterward communicated through Mrs. Conant at the circle — his words, of course, appearing in due time in the *Banner of Light*. The father at once proceeded to the office, demanding of Mr. Berry: "What do you mean by publishing that 'message' from my son?"

"Is it untrue?" queried the imperturbable Berry.

"No — but I don't want my son's name mixed up any further with such nonsense. I forbid your publishing any more of it. If you do, I will prosecute you in the courts," answered the father.

“Very well; you may rest assured that I *shall* print whatever communication your spirit son may desire to give.”

The son, who, of course, could not help being drawn by sympathy to the field where his was destined to be a test case, came the next week through the medium, his words to his relatives were published, and the indignant father immediately sought the services of a lawyer for the purpose of entering legal proceedings against the *Banner of Light* for what he held to be a defamation either of himself or the dead. But the lawyer, after examining the explanation placed at the head of the message department of the *Banner*, said that it precluded the possibility of prosecuting its publishers—that the spirit message as printed therein, was entirely unlike any ordinary newspaper article, and really, as far as the law was concerned, was not libelous in its nature. The proceedings were therefore abandoned, and though the son made several appeals to his friends afterward through the medium and the paper, nothing more, in the shape of resistance, was offered by them.

III.

Many messages were received in which Harvard College was directly or indirectly referred to, and the Faculty of that institution, conceiving that the character of their University was endangered thereby, hastened to “place themselves right, before the people” in the columns of the *Boston Courier*—Cornelius C. Felton, Professor of Greek, being their principal spokesman. The articles put forth in that paper concerning the Message Department and Mrs. Conant

were of a nature to bring the despised fact of spirit communion more fully before the public — to introduce a knowledge of its existence where otherwise it could not have penetrated, and to arouse individual curiosity to the investigation of this modern “unpardonable sin.” The greatest efforts were put forth by Felton and his associates to silence the utterances of the spirits through Mrs. Conant, but in vain. Several times, various Professors of Harvard, and others came to the circles (*incog.* to the audience, though known to Mr. Berry,) for the purpose either of disturbing by their opposing magnetic influence the delicately organized woman before them to such an extent that she could not be controlled by the spirits, or of discussing knotty points of logic or science with the various intelligences which from time to time made use of her powers as channels of earthly communion. Many were the intellectual struggles thus waged with the invisibles, who came off conquerors in debate in every instance. Mrs. Conant has at different periods of her life, both in the circle room, and on the public rostrum, been brought face to face in the mental arena with some of the most erudite scholars and solid thinkers on this continent, and has never been worsted in the argument. Many persons knowing to the verity of this statement are now living, and can — if they please — bear witness of the fact.

IV.

Early in 1857, Luther Colby, who was also an inmate of the National House, had the misfortune to dislocate his arm at the elbow joint by a fall as he passed out into the street. He returned to the hotel,

and sought a speedy audience with Dr. Kittredge (before mentioned as a Portsmouth physician of great repute who had been several years in the spirit world) that he might through Mrs. Conant, reduce the dislocation. Dr. Kittredge, on entrancing the medium, found that from want of physical power in the hands of Mrs. C., he should be obliged to abandon the operation, although nearly able to accomplish it. Mr. Colby, on perceiving that the spirit physician was unable to consummate the almost-concluded process, said :

“In passing up stairs, just after meeting with the accident, I heard a gentleman in the office addressed as ‘Doctor.’ Perhaps he can do the work.”

“Very well,” answered Dr. Kittredge, “I will go and examine his capacity as a surgeon, and report the result of my investigations.”

He soon returned, and wrote through the hand of the medium : “I know the gentleman—he was a student of mine in Portsmouth, N. H., many years ago. Call him up.” The Doctor was accordingly sent for, and on his arrival, being informed of what was required of him, at once set to work, and soon restored the limb to its natural condition. At the conclusion of the operation, a written message, signed R. [Rufus] Kittredge, was handed him by the medium, in which he was addressed as “Friend Pike.” This somewhat astonished him, as he was a stranger to all present, and was confident that he was not known to them by name. After giving him, in answer to questions, several tests as to his identity, Dr. Kittredge notified his medical friend that if he would meet him at a private sitting he would firmly convince him of the

reality of spirit return. Dr. Pike acceded, and was ere long thoroughly satisfied of the truth of the new gospel of Spiritualism. Desiring to afford his wife an opportunity for inquiring into the mystery of spirit communion, the Doctor soon after introduced her to Mrs. Conant. Mrs. Pike was very much alarmed at first, but yielding to the request of her husband, attended the séance, during which her (Mrs. P.'s) mother came into control, and so natural and undeniable was her presence to the daughter, that at the conclusion of the sitting she threw her arms about the neck of the medium, tears filling her eyes, and said: "I shall *never* be afraid again."

V.

While at the National House, many strange occurrences gave interest to her experience, two of which are here recorded: One evening in September, 1857, she was entranced, between the hours of 10 and 11, by the spirit of an Indian boy. Her husband and Mr. Berry were the only persons present, and as the time wore away, and no signs of her return seemed visible, both parties suggested the propriety of the spirit's departing, that the medium might be allowed to retire to rest; but he replied that the spirit of Mrs. C. was absent, and he must retain control till she came back. When, after the lapse of considerable time (as measured by the feelings of those who watched the increasing lateness of the hour) she did return, she was questioned as to where she had been, but was unable to give any connected account of her journeyings. On the next morning, Henry Wright, a friend of the medium, who was slowly sinking in consump-

tion — called on her, and said she gave him a great shock on the night previous; that at about eleven o'clock P. M., she appeared in his room; he was thoroughly awake, at the time, and at first supposed the person he saw to be his wife (who had passed the evening away from home) coming to administer his medicine; a second glance, however, showed him that it was Mrs. Conant. She approached him and bowed her head. He exclaimed, in trepidation:

“For God’s sake, Fannie Conant, what does this mean?”

He saw the lips of the figure before him move, but they gave forth no sound. He then asked:

“Have you passed to the spirit world?”

At this the apparition shook its head. He noticed, in the movement, that her hair was arranged in a different manner from any in which he had ever before seen it. Certain that she was dead, or that he was the victim of a mental delusion attendant on his bodily weakness, he staggered up from his couch to obtain a nearer view of her, but she quickly receded from him, and seemed to pass through the wall. When in the morning he came to see if his fears concerning her demise were correct, he minutely described to Mrs. Conant the dress she had worn on the previous night, and the style in which her hair was put up — this latter being a most convincing point, as it was then arranged in a manner in which it had never before, and never since has been — a lady in the house, who had a *penchant* for such experiments in the line of the toilette, and who was desirous of seeing how Mrs. C. would look after the change, having superintended the process. This peculiar arrange-

ment of the hair seen and described by Mr. Wright, while at the moment it was to him a positive proof that his friend was dead, was to her the strongest evidence of the truth of her apparition to him. His spiritual sight had probably been opened and quickened by the weakness of his physical body which soon after yielded to disease, and he passed out from the "land of the dead to the land of the living."

In the Summer of 1858, a rather unexpected exhibition of spirit power took place, which had a great influence on her mind in turning it in its desires from the physical to the mental phase of spirit manifestations, which latter became the rule in her experience thereafter. She had long been desirous—but had nearly abandoned the hope—that, for her own satisfaction, the spirits would give her some such manifestations as occurred to George A. Redman, (as, for instance, his being taken from his bed, or lifted from the floor when comparatively alone) but nothing of the kind seemed likely to occur, although from time to time she was promised that it should, by the invisibles. But on a certain evening she was suddenly aroused from a sound sleep by some power which was evidently endeavoring to lift her out of her bed. The chamber was not dark—she could see each familiar article therein, but nothing unusual was visible to which the disturbance could be attributed. Her first impression was that her husband had been playing some practical joke regarding her request for the exercise of spirit power in this way; but he proved to be still wrapped in slumber. The effort was renewed, she was unable to perceive the one making it, and her piercing screams immedi-

ately awoke her husband, who demanded the cause of her fright. The porter of the house, also startled, came running to the door, and finally the landlord and his wife were aroused. Mrs. Tubbs, passing into the sitting-room (which was generally used for séances) opened the inner door of Mrs. Conant's sleeping-room, pale with fright, and demanded the cause of the alarm.

"There are robbers here!—somebody has been trying to take me out of bed," was the reply of Mrs. C., while her husband said he did not know what the difficulty was. A hasty review of the room, and afterward the house, assured all concerned that the disturbance was not attributable to burglars, as no trace of such visitors could be found. Mrs. Conant, anxious to satisfy the parties in the Hotel that her trouble did not arise from a disordered imagination, allowed Mrs. Tubbs, while in her apartment, to inspect her person—the latter lady discovering thereon the clearly defined prints of five finger nails, showing the amount of power which had been exercised to remove her from her couch. Upon her recommendation, Mrs. Conant arose and dressed, and together they sat at the table to question her guides regarding the matter. Dr. Fisher, controlling, wrote that the occurrence was only a natural result of the request often made by Mrs. C., and that since she was frightened by its being granted, she had better refrain from repeating it, which advice the medium was exceedingly glad to follow.

While sitting at Mr. Berry's, in North Cambridge, as medium, she was ordered by her spirit friends to abstain from eating anything at night, especially

such articles as apples, nuts, raisins, etc.; and on several occasions when refreshments were passed to the company after the séance, and she (forgetting the injunction) attempted to partake, the article held in her hand and about to be eaten would be stricken from her grasp, sometimes passing entirely across the room, though no one could see the person by whom the deed was done. This phenomenon repeated itself while she resided at the National House. Her guides had expressly forbidden her to eat a certain article of food, and on one occasion, while sitting at the tea table, she decided to obey the promptings of her appetite, and so took some from the plate. Immediately that which she had raised in her hand, was stricken from it, and crossing the table, lodged like a well-directed shot in the vest front of a gentleman who sat opposite; he, perceiving no one save the lady before him — and supposing it thrown by her — was extremely astonished at what he supposed to be an act of unqualified rudeness. Mrs. Conant hastily left the room, and sought the landlord, desiring him to present an apology to the gentleman — who was a stranger to her — which proceeding proved satisfactory to him.

VI.

In the fall of 1858, Mr. Tubbs having retired from the management of the National House, and removed, with his family, to California, Dr. Pike commenced keeping house on Springfield Street — Mr. and Mrs. Conant boarding with him. Mrs. Pike was at that time already marked as a prey to consumption, and slowly sank till May, 1859. Throughout

her sickness, Mrs. Conant was to her as a sister, and many comforting evidences of spirit presence were granted through her to her fading friend; one of an especially cheering character was given a few days previous to her decease: Mrs. Pike had a constitutional dread of death—her whole nature seemed to shrink back from the verge of what appeared to her a precipice toward which disease was hurrying her. Notwithstanding the assurances of Drs. Fisher and Kittredge that she should stay in earth life as long as she really desired, she feared at each crisis of the disease, that she had lain down for the last time. Ten days previous to her transition, Dr. Kittredge came and described the home whither she was going, and the recital created such a desire in her to be there, that all fear of death was removed. He further told her, that when she was about to depart from the earthly form, her spirit friends would “place a little white lamb, with a blue ribbon around its neck, upon the foot of her bed.” When the final moment drew nigh (at about 6 o’clock on the morning of the 21st of May) though comparatively unexpected, as is often the case in lingering diseases, her face suddenly brightened, and she exclaimed to Mrs. Conant:

“Oh, Fannie! there is the lamb! the darling white lamb! Do sing. I am dying now—I know it!” She then turned to her husband, who stood by the bedside, and said:

“My dear, I wish you to promise me faithfully to be Fannie’s friend (as I have been) and her physician, and to take care of her in all the events of life.”

He promised, and her spirit passed on, leaving only to mortal sight a pale face lit up with the in-

flowing glories from over the border of death! The medium, and the husband, the one mourning the physical presence of a dear friend, the other struggling with that bereavement which must be felt ere it can be realized, were solaced by a message sent by the arisen one at noon of the same day, wherein it was stated that she had arrived at the beautiful home described before her apotheosis, and that everything was as had been foretold.

“I had a Lamb, from our Father’s fold,
 More dear to me than the finest gold;
 Its fleece was whiter than driven snow,
 And pure as streams from the mountain flow,
 Its eye was clear as the glist’ning dew,
 Where love looked out at those windows blue:
 And mine was as happy as heart could be,
 Whene’er those starry eyes beamed on me.

* * * * *

But veiled in gloom were my glad dreams, when
 Our Father sent for his Lamb again.
 I strove to keep her; but Death said, ‘No:
 The Shepherd calls, and the Lamb must go!
 But though I take her, it is in love;
 She goes to feed with the flocks above.’

* * * * *

‘Then sorrow not for the dear one dead:’
 ‘T was thus the spirit deliv’rer said;
 And Hope with angel voice whispered then,
 ‘Weep not: thy Lamb thou wilt find again!’ ”

—*William Denton.*

VII.

After remaining at the residence of Dr. Pike from October, 1858, to June, 1859,—at which time he ceased housekeeping—the medium and her husband removed to the Cummings House (during her stay at which occurred her voyage to New York for Captain Gibbs, previously mentioned,) and thence to the residence of Mrs. Oliver Stearns, 32 Bradford Street, Boston. While there, Mrs. Conant, who was returning home from a séance, and was about turning into Acton Street, saw some one coming from Bradford Street, and said, half-musingly, to herself: “Why, if Abbie [Mrs. Pike] were alive, I should say that was certainly her.” The lady drew nearer, and Mrs. C. perceived that she was dressed in a black silk, brown and white plaid shawl, and a bonnet trimmed with pink flowers—just as she had seen her friend Abbie costumed for a walk in the old days. She asked the medium, when she came up to her, if a certain person (giving name) resided on Bradford Street, to which Mrs. Conant replied that she did not know. She then recognized the face and voice as being those of her friend, but felt bewildered at the occurrence. Mrs. C. did not remove her gaze for one moment from the mysterious stranger, and the further to satisfy herself that the person before her was a human being, took a portion of her shawl and rubbed it between her thumb and finger, that she might be assured of its material texture. She was strongly impressed—although for some reason unknown to her she did not—to cry out: “Why, Abbie, is this you?” She did not cease her grasp

of the shawl till she reached the door of her residence, when on ascending the steps, she abandoned her hold for an instant; one of the girls at the house opened the door at the moment—thus rendering unnecessary the ringing of the bell—but when she looked for her companion, although hardly three seconds had passed, she was gone! nor could any trace of her be discovered, though Mrs. C. ran down again into the street, and despatched one of the children of Mrs. Stearns to the contiguous houses;—the answer returned by the neighbors questioned was invariably that no such person had been seen by them. Sometime afterward, at a circle, the spirit of Mrs. Pike came, saying to Mrs. Conant: “Well, Fannie, you were determined to see that my dress was really of silk, and my shawl of wool.” She then told her that she had appeared to her in that manner in accordance with a promise made while in earth life, that she would present herself after her demise so plainly that she could not mistake her. Mrs. Conant never saw her in like manner again, but her organism was controlled by her at different times afterward, a series of letters descriptive of the spirit land being given by her, which may be found in the files of the *Banner of Light* for 1859.

Many singular manifestations of a nature kindred to those already described, except that those on the mental plane were in the majority over the physical, occurred while she resided at Bradford Street, where she remained till April, 1861, when herself and husband became inmates of the house occupied by Mrs. A. F. Dewitt, in Ashland Place, Boston. The family removing from thence to Exeter Place, they fol-

lowed its fortunes thither. This latter house was the scene of a very severe illness for Mrs. Conant. She was attacked with a malignant malady (gastric fever) which seeking out the chest as its seat seemed to ramify throughout the entire system, threatening to speedily close her earthly pilgrimage. Looking back, in memory, over those days it still seems to her a miracle that she recovered. During all these hours of trial she was treated and sustained by her spirit physician, and Dr. Pike, her unfailing friend. "Capt. Gibbs" was also ready, when he could be of service, to aid her.

From Exeter Place, Mr. and Mrs. Conant then removed to the residence of Mr. Gillett — the brother of Mrs. Dewitt — in Cambridgeport. Many excellent manifestations of a mental character took place while residing there. Among the spirits who frequently controlled the medium at this place was Willie Lincoln, the little spirit son of the then President of the United States. By him, through the mediumistic organization of Mrs. C., the reëlection of his father to the Presidency, and his subsequent tragical death at the hand of an assassin, were correctly predicted.

VIII.

As the object of the present volume is to present in as brief and concise a manner as possible the life-experiences of Mrs. Conant, the events, manifestations, and results flowing from acts performed, are presented in groups, each complete as far as may be in itself as to detail, but not strictly in chronological order. It is now imperative that some reference should be made to another department of labor in

the spiritual vineyard in which the subject of this biography has performed great and abiding service :

From 1856 to 1857, in connection with her duties in the giving of public and private sittings — which engaged her time frequently from 9 A. M. to 6 at night, and from 7 P. M. to 12 midnight — Mrs. Conant lectured in unconscious trance, each Sunday. Her addresses were principally delivered in Boston and such places in the vicinity — Charlestown, Malden, Medford, Salem, etc. — as she could easily reach on Saturday afternoon, and return from on Monday without detriment to her other cares. She continued these public addresses till the *Banner of Light* was inaugurated, after which she lectured but a few times — once at Foxboro', Mass., and the last time at Allston Hall, Boston. Sometimes her audience would be allowed to choose the subject she was to treat, after she had taken her seat upon the platform ; at others the matter to be considered would be selected by her spirit guides.

Her first appearance upon the rostrum as a public expounder of the spiritual philosophy, occurred at the Meionaon, Tremont Temple, Boston, in July, 1856, and the circumstances which attended the effort did much to enlighten the minds of those around her as to the peculiarity of the laws governing spirit control. She was to speak in the evening, and throughout the day she was so reduced in vitality by temporary sickness that she repeatedly declared her fears as to the possibility of *any* spirit being able to hold control of her when the time arrived for her lecture. Mr. Berry, however, who had announced her, was exceedingly anxious that she should make

the attempt. On her commencing her discourse the spirit — as she had expected — lost possession of her organism, and the lecture, so far as a literary production was concerned, proved a failure. Dr. Fisher, her guardian, then took control, and to show the audience that, owing to conditions sometimes existing, certain spirits could hold possession of the instrument when others could not, continued to influence her for upwards of an hour and a half, giving medical examinations of all who would come forward for the purpose. Those present, who at first became fearful of a failure in the meeting, pronounced it, as a spiritual manifestation, to be a grand success.

Her second effort was made in Salem, Mass., at what was known as the Sewall Place Church, and occurred in the following winter. On this occasion she was not entranced till she rose to speak — somewhat to the disquietude of her mind lest her influences had deserted her, or would do so, as on a former occasion — when she was instantly controlled, it seeming to her that a cloud of light enveloped her; so quickly, indeed, did she lose her perception of the scene before her, that when she awoke the impression was firmly fixed in her mind that she must have fainted. So strong was her belief in this fact, that she asked the chairman of the meeting if it were not so, and was assured by him that the audience had listened, with frequent applause, to a fine lecture of over an hour's duration. She afterwards spoke at the same place several times, with good results, having no further trouble as to her control.

It will be well to recount here an incident serving to illustrate to the reader unacquainted with the

phenomenon known as "trance speaking," the perfect originality of the lectures to be given in the mind of the spirit controlling, together with the complete passivity of the intellectual powers of the medium. At the time one of the wardens of the Massachusetts State Prison, located at Charlestown, was murdered by a convict, the spirit guides of Mrs. Conant gave notice that in view of the public excitement on the subject, they would speak through her organism the next Sunday evening, at Horticultural Hall, Boston, with regard to "Prison Discipline." The evening arrived, and the house was filled with an audience in which skepticism and curiosity were largely developed, and much interest appeared to exist as to what "the spirits" could know or impart concerning the management of convicted felons on earth. But there came no lecturer, though nearly half an hour beyond the time announced had passed away. The medium, who was then boarding at the National House, had forgotten the engagement entirely. On the appearance of Mr. Tubbs and his lady at the hall, the management eagerly asked: "Where is Mrs. Conant?" and after a moment's consideration they were obliged to reply that they did not know — that they had seen her sometime before they left the house, in the sitting-room, but giving no signs of preparation for her departure for the hall. Justly concluding that she had forgotten her appointment, the committee hastily despatched a carriage to bring her to the place of meeting. On her arrival the impatient audience were perfectly satisfied with having waited, the address which followed being pronounced as remarkable in its grasp and thorough in its exposition of the

subject. Several highly complimentary notices were given of it by the daily press of the city.

Another field of success for her as an exponent of the teachings of Spiritualism was in her native city, Portsmouth, in which she fairly disproved the maxim that "a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." She visited that quiet city in the fall of 1856, without notifying any of her relatives that she was to speak there. Her father (who had in 1842 been married again — his second wife's maiden name being Dorcas Grant) came home one day, saying to his wife quite excitedly that posters were out "down town," announcing that Mrs. J. H. Conant would speak on Spiritualism, and that he believed it must be his daughter Fannie. On her arrival in the city he attended her lectures, and such was the interest created by her speeches among the people, that he was soon surrounded by many inquirers desirous of knowing the facts concerning her early history, and how long she had been possessed of this gift. On the latter subject he was forced to admit that he could give no information. She afterwards, at different seasons, addressed the people of Portsmouth, at Lord's Chapel, and the Academy Building. At the close of one of her lectures in the latter hall she was surprised to meet with a number of her deceased mother's church friends, who were present and congratulated her upon her success in the exposition of the cause she had espoused, and at the evidences of public favor which followed her ministrations.

IX.

Leaving Cambridgeport, she returned to the Cummings House, Boston, after which she went to live in Medford, and then removed to Watertown. While there her residence was named Kanagawah Lodge, by her Indian friends—the word Kanagawah signifying “teacher”—as an acknowledgment, on their part, of her labors for the enlightenment of their race. She then returned to Mrs. Pope’s residence in Boston for a second term in 1867. After continuing some two years at the latter place, she removed her residence to No. 69 Dover Street, where lived Mrs. Dewitt with whom she had formerly been located in Ashland and Exeter Places. During all this time her mediumistic labors were unremitting, but nothing out of the regular course as detailed in the preceding pages occurred. Shortly after her arrival at Dover Street she was attacked by a virulent fever, which prostrated her almost immediately, and continued for a long season, with no improvement in the patient. During the first of her illness she was under treatment of Dr. Pike as before, but her husband was exceedingly anxious that the homeopathic system should be tried in her case; a band of spirits who had manifested through her had also frequently expressed a desire that that style of practice might be used for awhile at least; and finally, yielding to the request of both, thinking she could not possibly recover from the disease, she gave her consent that her old friend and medical adviser should be discharged and the experiment inaugurated. The spirits advocating the change asked only three days for the trial,

but after the homeopathists had conducted her case from February 1st, 1869, to March 2d, same year, the patient continuing to grow more reduced, till she was unable to raise her head from her pillow unaided, the regular band of spirits by whom she had been assisted and controlled in the past—who had either been forced away from her by uncongenial magnetisms, or had yielded the field that the new comers might make the experiment fully and to their own satisfaction—returned, and influencing her, demanded that Dr. Pike be recalled, and the homeopathists discharged. The Doctor, thinking only of his dying wife's injunction, waived all memory of the indignity put upon him, and resumed the case, though he said it was hard to be recalled at the eleventh hour.

When he entered the room, the patient looked at her old physician, and said :

“Doctor, do you think you can cure me?”

“Yes—I can!” he replied.

He, however, was obliged to admit that the extreme weakness into which she had fallen would necessitate a considerable length of time in her recovery; in fact, he doubted if she ever entirely surmounted the effects of the fever—which has proved to be the case. She, however, gradually grew stronger, and one day, after nearly two months of prostration, he announced to her that he was about to take her to the Circle Room.

“Why!” she exclaimed, “I cannot trust myself to go there so soon.”

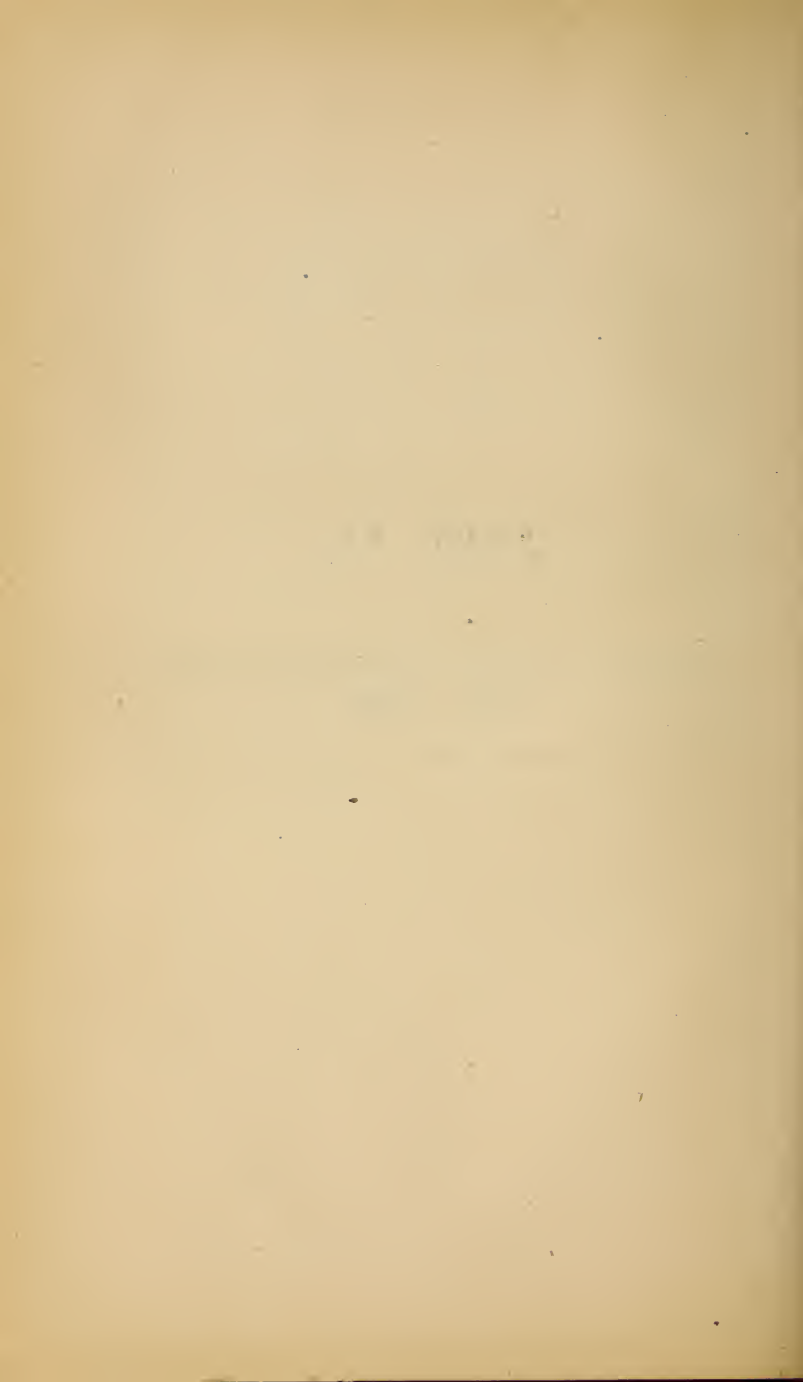
“Let some one else trust you, then,” confidently replied the Doctor, “it will do you good to go out.”

She made the venture, and found herself possessed of sufficient strength to visit the circle room, go up the two flights of stairs without receiving aid from any visible agent, attend to the duties of her mediumship, and again return, without serious difficulty, to her own home. The words of the Doctor were verified, and she continued from this time slowly to improve, till she attained a degree of health compatible with the regular discharge of business engagements.

During her convalescence from this sickness, her husband, whose anxiety had preyed upon his mind to too great an extent, began to exhibit signs of insanity, and finally succumbed to the mental malady to such an extent that it was found necessary — on a consultation of Drs. Walker, Fisher, and McKay, of the South Boston Asylum — to remove him to the lunatic hospital at Taunton, Mass. At this retreat he remains at the present time, having as yet shown no signs of recovery.

PART VI.

FURTHER INCIDENTS. — TEACHINGS OF THE
SPIRIT WORLD.



PART VI.

— “Ours the wide temple where worship is free
As the wind of the prairie, the wave of the sea;
You may build your own altar wherever you will,
For the roof of that temple is over you still.

“One dome overarches the star-bannered shore;
You may enter the Pope’s or the Puritan’s door,
Or pass with the Buddhist his gateway of bronze,
For a priest is but Man, be he bishop or bonze.”
— *Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

I.

WHILE Mrs. Conant was for the second time residing at Mrs. Pope’s, a lady, (who it afterward appeared was related to Andrew Johnson, then President of the United States,) called at the office of the *Banner of Light*, and desired to know if she could by any means obtain a private séance with her. Being referred to Mr. William White, the chairman, he informed her that the medium seldom gave such sittings, but that she might confer with her when the circle about to be held was concluded, and perhaps she would grant her request. When the séance was ended, the stranger made known her wish to Mrs. C., who, although she protested that she did not and could not give a private sitting to anybody, finally yielded to the entreaties of the lady upon the assur-

ance that her would-be patron had come a long distance to consult her upon important business. The medium asked her visitor why she was so confident that an exception to the general rule would be made in her case, as to undertake a long journey in the face of seeming uncertainty, and was informed that at a circle in Washington, D. C., some of her (Mrs. C.'s) own guardian band of spirits had told her so. Satisfied that if such was the case, something of more than ordinary interest was involved, Mrs. Conant made an agreement by which the lady was to come to her rooms on the following afternoon at 3 o'clock (there being no circle on that day.) At the time specified, the stranger made her appearance, but was told by the influences controlling, that they would be unable to accomplish what she wished in a less period than ten days. "I will wait," she answered. The medium desired to know her residence; to which she replied that she was stopping at the Revere House, and that she would return for a sitting at the expiration of the allotted period. On the tenth (which was Friday, and not a public circle) day, Mrs. Conant remained at home in expectation of her unknown visitor, but she did not keep her appointment, which was thought by the medium to be a strange circumstance when she remembered how anxious she appeared to be for its consummation. The next day (also a leisure one for her) Mrs. Conant went out, and while in the business portion of the city making some purchases, she became aware of the presence of "Spring-Flower" — a young Indian girl, one of her guides — who said :

"Go home ; your visitor is there to-day."

The medium, somewhat piqued by the lady's failure to keep her engagement on the previous day, replied :

"I am under no obligation to go home."

"I know it," answered the spirit, "but you *must* go home."

Rather unwillingly Mrs. C. entered a car, and on arriving at her rooms found the lady in waiting ; she having repaired thither, and removed her cloak and hat in a manner at once familiar and full of confidence. As Mrs. Conant opened the door of the apartment, the visitor said :

"I know I am a day late, but your spirit friends told me that I should see you."

The medium then asked — as she had on a previous occasion — "through whom?" but her visitor refused to disclose the channel of communication. In answer to the question whether she had remained in Boston during the ten days demanded by the invisibles, she said she had not ; that she was troubled with a tendency to pneumonia, which the climate of the East served to aggravate, and her physician had ordered her to go South again ; she had therefore returned to Washington, and had been delayed one day in her journey back to Boston.

The two proceeded to take seats at the table, but after remaining in a passive condition for nearly an hour, nothing of interest occurred, and Mrs. C. wished to close the séance ; the lady, however, earnestly requested her to continue. Taking a letter from her pocket, and giving it to the medium she asked :

"What impression do you get concerning this?"

"I can't think of anything but Andy Johnson," answered Mrs. Conant, laughingly.

“Well, he is a good person to think of,” returned the visitor; “sit still, and I am sure we shall obtain something.”

Her recommendation was followed for sometime longer, and then the medium's hand was controlled, a message of several pages being written, which the lady seemed to understand thoroughly, although Mrs. C. was unable to fathom it for herself. The medium was then entranced, and so continued for upward of an hour, at the expiration of which, the lady declared herself perfectly satisfied with what she had received, and said that the spirits had requested her to wait a few days longer — they having further advice to give. She asked, before leaving:

“Shall I send this manuscript to the one who is waiting for it?” and the answer was written: “No — telegraph that you have obtained it, and that you are to wait for more.”

At the expiration of the time appointed by the spirits the lady returned, and at the conclusion of the séance stated that some day she would acquaint the medium with the importance of the business transacted through her organism; but this promise has not yet been fulfilled. Mrs. Conant's spirit friends, however, apprised her that her visitor was a relative of President Johnson, and that she had been sent to Boston to discover, if possible, what was to be the result of the movement then on foot for his impeachment by the Senate. Of the truth of the latter portion of the story she felt confirmed in her own mind, as she was obliged to translate certain passages of the messages written by the spirits to the lady, that she might understand the hurriedly writ-

ten words. Several of these points which thus became familiar, were recognized by her in some of the state papers of President Johnson put forth at that and subsequent dates. Among other things of which he was assured by the spirits (and, of course, of the most importance to him at the time) was the fact that he would not and could not be deposed. The quotations recognized were made, from the reasons assigned by the unseen intelligences to substantiate their opinion.

A sister of Gen. McCook, of Ohio, who was stopping at Washington, was one day astonished by the appearance in her presence of a senatorial friend of hers, who jocularly remarked:

"I have got a letter for you from the 'dead-letter' office." He at the same time exhibited a copy of the *Banner of Light*, in the Message Department of which was a word from her brother; but instead of treating the matter lightly, as the Senator had anticipated, she read it in good faith as a greeting from the "other side of life," and subsequently, being acquainted with President Johnson, sought his advice with regard to the course she ought to pursue concerning the matter. He told her to visit Boston in person, and said that calling upon the medium would be the shortest and most reliable method of satisfying herself as to the genuineness of the message. She accordingly made the journey, and remained several days in the city, during which time Mrs. Conant gave her a number of private sittings which were highly satisfactory.

Two incidents, out of chronological order, but pertinent as showing the complete passivity of Mrs. Conant to the influence of the unseen intelligences,

are here presented: the publishers, perceiving the rapidity and skill with which her hand was used by the spirits for mechanically transcribing their thoughts, suggested that the invisibles should make the effort to prepare a lengthy article, or story, if they so pleased, for the columns of the *Banner of Light*. Obedient to the directions of her guides, the medium appointed an hour each day in which the spirits were to write — she remaining all the while in a normal state — and they regularly fulfilled their part of the plan. She was not allowed at the close of this hour or during the interim of writing again, to peruse the manuscripts written; the reason assigned being, that by so doing, her own mind would become interested in the recital, and consequently she would not be so easily brought under control by the spirit authors. So complete was her ignorance of the story as its plot was unfolded, that she refused at first to read the proofs brought her from the printing office by Mr. Colby, declaring that as she had nothing to do with writing it, she must not become responsible for the correctness of its details; but on it being intimated to her by the spirit authors that by her reading the story in the proof they would be enabled to impress her mind should any error exist, she consented so to do. The title-page — which was not written till the narrative was completed — announced as its name: “The Hermit of the Powow;” and the incidents developed proved it to be drawn from scenes and occurrences happening in the vicinity of Mr. Colby’s native town — Amesbury, Mass.

A German musician, whose knowledge of the English language was very limited, on his arrival in this country was met by an old acquaintance of his in the

Fatherland, and after some conversation on other subjects, the matter of Spiritualism was introduced, the friend being a firm believer in the spiritual philosophy. The new-comer was rather inclined to treat the subject in a non-serious light. He finally demanded of his friend if the spirits could write German through a medium who did not, individually, know a word of that language.

The reply, unhesitatingly, was, "Yes."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the immigrant.

"Let us go to a medium, and demonstrate it," retorted the resident.

They visited such a person, and on a spirit taking control, they were informed that the test required could not be given through that instrument, but that if they would call upon Mrs. Conant—the unseen intelligence giving them her address—they would be successful. They were much puzzled, as they had no acquaintance with the lady, but, obedient to instructions, they hastened to find her residence. On reaching it, and ringing the door-bell, they were met by a servant, to whom, in broken English, the object of their visit was explained—*i. e.*, that they desired a private sitting with Mrs. Conant. On their message being delivered to Mrs. C., she directed the girl to inform the gentlemen that she was not at that time in the habit of giving private sittings, and must decline their request. Her directions were obeyed, and the visitors rose to depart, but before they had closed the outer door in going, she was strongly impressed to hasten down the stairs herself, and call them back again—the impression proving too powerful to be withstood. At her statement that by some intelli-

gence she was inwardly advised to give them the sitting they desired, they returned. The non-English speaking German had with him a flute, and his friend, (who was more acquainted with the Anglo-Saxon tongue) requested him to play a soft air, understanding the importance of harmony at a circle or sitting, and desirous of quieting the powerful and skeptical will of his companion by interesting him in the tune to be played — thus rendering him passive in aid of the occurrences sought to be compassed. Mrs. Conant sat at the table with pencil and paper ready for whatever influence might choose to indite an epistle. While the performer was yet engaged in playing, the medium's hand was controlled, and she proceeded mechanically to write with the utmost rapidity, in German, a missive directed to the skeptical one before her. The message purported to be from his father, and was couched in his style of expression; indeed, so perfectly true was it as to detail, and correct in idiom, that the doubter was extremely moved, and told his delighted Spiritualist friend that he was utterly confounded. His attention thus signally called to the matter, he continued his investigations, and shortly afterward became convinced beyond doubt of the truth of spirit return and communion.

Here are two queries for the solution of the scientific. How were the "Hermit of the Powow" and this letter in an entirely foreign language, of which the medium was utterly ignorant, produced, except as claimed by Mrs. Conant, viz., that disembodied intelligences, once mortal but now freed from "physical" chains — conversant with the facts of the story, and the German language aforesaid, controlled

her hand — she remaining in a passive condition — and wrote out the two mechanically, without the least aid from *her* mental faculties?

In May, 1871, Mrs. Conant removed from 69 Dover street, with the Dewitt family, to their new residence, 76 Waltham street, Boston, where she at present resides. During her sojourn at this place nothing of interest, aside from what has been in general character indicated in the foregoing pages, has occurred.

II.

But a brief space of time has elapsed since that effective, close-drawn, and eloquent compend of the teachings of the unseen world through the medium of the Questions and Answers Department of the *Banner of Light*, as weekly delivered by Mrs. Conant at the Public Free Circles: *Flashes of Light from the Spirit Land*, was given to the world. No need exists that a word of approbation should here be spoken concerning that remarkable volume — it stands by itself in the field of Spiritual literature, a pyramidal something upon which breadth of diction, originality of thought, and depth of penetration have affixed their seal. The lessons it contains are recommended to the reader of the present volume, as the *Flashes* may be regarded as a sheaf of selected wheat laid upon the threshing floor of public opinion, and which fears not the flail of the truth seeker, however much the unthinking may, through inattention or willful blindness, lose sight of the golden grain it yields at every stroke. The information bestowed by angelic intelligences, through the organism of Mrs. Conant, and other media all over the world, has tended to broaden

the view of the moral conservative, and open grander scenes to the daring world-finders of religious liberalism. Already, filled by the divine afflatus vouchsafed to the present hour, the scattered videttes of the great army of human progress, pushing forward into the dim unknown, have crossed the "silent river," and stood triumphant (even if but momentarily) where the tented hills of immortal life are bright with the glory of a sun that shall "never more go down!" As it were to erect a milestone on the road of human progress, the following eloquent epitome of the general teachings of the Spiritual Philosophy (as enunciated by the subject of this sketch, and her brothers and sisters in the field) is presented in the words of another :

"Looking beyond it, [the physical change called death,] what awaits us? Penetrating the thin veil which separates the spiritual from the material, what do we see with the purified vision of faith and love! An endless ascension from sphere to sphere — a perpetual growth in knowledge and affection — a constant acquisition of new faculties — a boundless expansion of the horizon of observation and perception — a glorious and inspiring intercourse with the prophets and seers, the sages and philosophers, the poets and artists of all antiquity — the power to survey the entire field of mundane history, from the first moment of our planet's existence until the hour at which we were permitted to take our departure from it. And through the ages yet to come — which will be to us like those which have rolled away — a perpetual now, we shall watch with the deepest interest and the tenderest solicitude, the progress of our race upon the earth. We shall be permitted, indeed, to instruct, to comfort, to counsel, and to guide them; and we shall be enabled to comprehend — though still in a finite degree — the eternal truth that God is love."

In the field of Spiritual revelation, however, the student often meets with statements which for a moment shock all his preconceived notions regarding

the sciences ; geography, chemistry, natural history, etc., are apparently brought to the bar of condemnation ; but these points thus raised are to be submitted to the action of reason for acceptation or rejection, and as educated perceptions are the vertebræ in the spinal column of reason, in proportion to the depth of understanding, and power of receptivity, will be the action of a new truth among the various members of society. The existence of said truth is *not*, however, endangered by doubts ; it can always afford to wait till the appropriate hour arrives for it to be recognized.

Mrs. Conant's experiences, for instance, have led her to accept, and to advocate as true, the ideas, old as human thought on the subject, though scouted by many leaders of scientific and theologic opinion, that animals while living in this rudimentary sphere have the power, by reason of opened sight, to penetrate into "the internal atmosphere of the natural earth," and behold objects not to be detected by ordinary human vision ; that they are often "impressed or inspired by an influx from that spiritual world which is in such contiguity with us all," and that when their brief existence on earth is passed, there remains for them another and happier state of being. Among other demonstrations received by her of the truth of the former proposition, none may be ranked as more convincing than the conduct of her favorite dog, "Carlo," which animal she cherished as a pet for many years. On several occasions, spirits anxious to manifest themselves at the circle, but unable to do so, have followed her to her own room, and lingered around her, causing her to be cognizant of their presence, and inducing a morbid nervousness which

forced her to walk the floor without cessation, and with no apparent prospect of relief. At such times the dog would accompany her in her paces up and down the apartment, growling and showing his teeth, the hair upon his back bristling with rage. If she ordered him to lie down and be quiet, he would do so, but perceiving the spirits about to advance again; he would start up, snarling, and come to her side, snapping at the intruders—always pointing out the place where they stood as plainly as did her own perceptions—and when they had left the apartment, he would give vent to his satisfaction in joyous gambols.

A favorite cat, which was much in her company, also showed that she discerned the spirits who frequented the rooms. Mrs. Conant has for years (as heretofore stated) passed, from habit and necessity, the hours preceding the séance, on circle days, in sitting quietly in her room—seeing no company, and avoiding anything of a disturbing tendency. It was the custom of this cat at such times to curl herself upon the carpet at the feet of the medium and fall asleep, rarely ever stirring from that posture till the lady arose to go out. On one such occasion, while the cat was thus positioned and circumstanced, Mrs. Conant became deeply interested in a book she was perusing, and suddenly awoke to the fact that she had overstepped the limits of the time allowed for reaching the office. Looking up, she perceived standing by her side, the spirit of Father Fitz James (one of her guardian band) who said: “You are ten minutes late!” Before Mrs. C. had time to make the slightest movement, which might be considered as

causing the cat to awake, that animal opened its eyes, looked straight upward toward the influence, and springing upon "all-fours," with curved back, and all the usual signs of anger or fear, proceeded to "spit" at him after the most approved feline manner. This demonstration concluded, as if to warn her mistress, the cat sought shelter in the further corner of the room beneath some of the furniture. The medium distinctly saw the spirit smile at the excited movements of the animal, after which he disappeared.

III.

As items of evidence in proof of the verity of the second proposition, the following incidents are presented. While she was once in the neighborhood of Medford in company with a party of friends in an uncomfortably crowded vehicle, the plan was proposed to make a short cut through the woods, by which four miles could be saved. All favored the project except Mrs. Conant, who could not think of it approvingly, though she was not able to tell why she objected thereto. Hardly, however, had the head of the horse been turned toward the desired direction than the animal began to rear and plunge in a manner entirely at variance with his previous reputation as a very quiet family beast. The party, who had just overpowered Mrs. Conant's objections to the wood path, now begun anxiously to inquire of her: "What is the matter?" while the horse at the same time commenced a backward movement which threatened to be anything but agreeable. The medium said she did not know what this portended, but she could see that her Indian control, Wapanaw, was

standing directly before the horse, refusing to allow him to proceed, and evidently strongly impressing him with a disposition to take the steps in retrograde just referred to. The medium was certain that the horse could perceive the spirit and feel his warning influence as plainly as she could herself; but the party being skeptical on that point, she desired that the animal be turned in the opposite direction and along the regular road; the point would then be settled as to whether it was a cautionary disembodied human spirit, or his own obstinacy which troubled the equine. On turning the carriage the horse moved off soberly as was his wont, and the journey was completed without accident.

Mrs. Conant, while residing on Hanson Street, Boston, was suffering from incipient congestion of the heart, and while "down town" one day, became aware of the danger of a crisis in her case. She made the best of her way, fainting and exhausted, toward the office of Dr. Pike (which fortunately was situated not far off) and succeeded in reaching it, when she sank upon a sofa. The spirit of Mr. Berry (her former friend and patron) then took control of her organization and informed the doctor that there was extreme doubt of her surviving the attack, but that he thought he could hold control till she could be removed to her home. The doctor at once proceeded with his charge, by private conveyance, to her house, being obliged to carry his patient up the steps and stairs to her room. Arriving there he deposited his almost insensible burden upon a lounge. At this juncture the dog "Carlo," who seemed to be moved by some strong excitement, sud-

denly whined and sprung from the floor, striking her heavily upon the breast; he then begun to lick her face, and to breathe vigorously into her nostrils. She awoke to consciousness in a brief season, and informed the physician — who had at the first decided to drive the dog away; but either on second thought, or in obedience to spirit impression, concluded to allow him to continue — that she seemed to be dead, the spirit appearing to be completely free from the physical form, when the sudden blow struck by the dog called her back to her body (having probably set the heart in motion) and the magnetic life imparted by his breathing on and licking her face, brought her again to conscious existence, and saved her for the work yet marked out for her — as for all — in the great plan of eternal wisdom.

IV.

This dog “Carlo” departed from his material form on Christmas day in 1870, and was buried, with his bed, in Mrs. Conant’s lot at the Forest Hill Cemetery, which lies outside the Highland District of Boston. The day after he was interred, the spirit of Charles H. Crowell, (brother of Mrs. Conant, and himself a remarkable medium) appeared to her, telling that her pet was with him in spirit life.

For eighteen years had “Carlo” patiently trotted along the devious path of canine experience — growing lame and deaf (in common with the majority of humanity) as age came on, and at last a singular friendship appeared to spring up between himself and a young dog named “Gip,” the property of Mrs. Dewitt, at whose house Mrs. C. was then making her home. When “Carlo” went out into the street,

"Gip" would follow to look after the safety of his infirm companion, which he would do with as much care as if he were a child conducting an aged parent through the crowded streets of the metropolis. Often when "Carlo" ventured a short distance from the house alone, "Gip" would go, if informed of the fact, and bring him back, leading him by the collar, with unerring fidelity.

Satisfied beyond doubt by the teachings and impressions of the spirits who are her constant companions, Mrs. Conant confidently expects to meet and regain her pet in the world toward which she is going, just as surely as she possessed him in this sphere of fading materiality. She thinks that there is but a step between us and the animal creation, and that that step does *not* rob them of their immortality.

"Shall we not, in that dim Beyond
Find all the small links, true and fond,
That clung so closely round us here?
Home is so dear on earth, we doubt
If we should know our Home without
The humble things that made it dear."

The idea involved in the declaration that there is a future life for the animal creation, challenging as it does man's proud claim for himself alone, has, after all, rather been held in abeyance than distinctly condemned by the cultivated and thinking classes of all past times; while the more ignorant have been seemingly satisfied with the assurance of many would-be molders of public opinion, that they are possessed of a something radically different in essence from that incarnated in the brute, the great mass of speculators and metaphysicians have placed it, in common with many other subjects bordering upon the occult

in Nature's arcana, behind a screen in a shadowy alcove of the mind, and over its hiding place they have written "the unknowable." Thus it has rather been waived consideration than trodden under foot in the open arena of mental conflict and denunciation.

Some years ago a sketch was issued, purporting to give to the world of Christian believers a record of the privations undergone by the disciples of their Master, as embodied in the history of the life and labors of a self-sacrificing Methodist clergyman in a rough and stony field in northern New England, where but little pecuniary results flowed into his coffers. Reduced by the expenses of sickness and other outgoes incident to the rearing of a large family, this poor toiler in the vineyard of souls found it necessary to sell his horse, with the aid of which he had been enabled to make more endurable the weary mountain miles which stretched between his home and those of the parishioners he was expected to visit. On the day when the favorite "Whitey" was to be taken to a far distant town by his purchaser, the father chanced to overhear his two daughters, both of tender years, as they conversed with their pet for the last time. Tears filled their eyes as they stroked his smooth coat, and offered him food in their hands. At last the eldest, with quivering lips, said:

"*Poor Whitey*, we must bid you good by."

"But," lisped her infant sister, hopefully, "we shall meet him in heaven."

"No," replied the elder, whose sight, more dim from earthly education, saw not the instinctive touch of nature conveyed in the words of the younger: "*Whitey has n't any soul!* he will die, and he will

not be in heaven. We shall never—never see him again!!” whereupon both gave way to their feelings in sobs, for whose misery time was the only medicine on earth. This view, so briefly yet comprehensively stated by the minister’s elder daughter, may be regarded as the position blankly assumed by those who in maturer life have failed to fully consider all the various bearings of the subject, but the majority of those who have—if they do not accept to the full the logical sequence which follow in their train, agree with Ruskin, when he says :

“There is that in every animal’s eye, a dim image and gleam of humanity, a flash of strange light, through which their life looks out and up to our great mystery of control over them, and claims the fellowship of the creature, if not of the soul.”

We are told that :

“Reason serves when pressed,
But honest instinct comes a volunteer;”

And by a critical analysis and classification of the impulses of the human mind, it may be said that while reason seems a something strengthening with the growth, and toughening with the widening of educational scope and life experience in the man, there also appears another range of feelings, coming closer to our interior nature, and which may properly bear the designation of human instinct or intuition, which clearly defines the surety of certain things without calling in, or acknowledging the authority of reason in the matter to be treated. To love purely is the nearest approach to the atmosphere of the angel world vouchsafed us while yet tenants of these mortal habitations ; and to feel at least a longing for,

if not a certainty of the continued existence of the objects of our affection — whether human, animal or otherwise, — is the instinctive or intuitive course of the bereaved heart, however it may be stifled or denied external utterance, and whatever may be the barriers of theological education or social position.

Why should the revelation of the existence of animals in the better land, made by the spirits in our day, create a jar in the harmonious action of any reflecting mind? One who has given much attention to the subject from the ordinary standpoint of sympathy for our dumb servitors, has summed up the matter by stating that a future life for animals is their due, because of their otherwise uncompensated sufferings, their sense of identity, notwithstanding the constant change in the atoms of their bodily structure, their possessing perception, memory, volition, affection — many instances of which are recorded — a sense of justice, and other qualities which in degree they share with man. It will not do to present as an “insuperable” objection the declaration that “in animals these qualities have a lower range,” as “they are often developed to an extent beyond what we find in infants, idiots, lunatics, in some adult human beings, and even some entire tribes of men.” How much better to agree with the asseverations of those, who, passing within the veil, return to us, assuring us to the fullest extent, though not in the exact language of this author here quoted, that “Nothing fair and beautiful can perish out of the universe of God. * * * In the beautiful archetypal world, we shall surely find fairer flowers, brighter birds, and animals more beauteous than ever were seen here!”

On one occasion a touching incident in point, occurred in the mediumistic experience of Mrs. Conant. A lady called on her, seemingly in great sorrow from a recent bereavement, and desired a private sitting. After waiting for sometime, during which considerable mental agitation was experienced by the medium at the strange delay, and the singular feelings which seemed to envelop her, Mrs. Conant passed into a trance and saw vividly a tree upon which was perched a bright plumaged parrot. This was the sole result of the vision, and was so strongly impressed upon her recollection that she at once related it to her visitor, (on regaining a normal state) who was much affected by the announcement; she informed the medium that she was alone in the world, and had for years bestowed her affection—as if to a person—upon a pet bird of that species, and that her favorite had recently died, since when the solitude she felt had been almost unbearable, and she longed to know if indeed as some declared, she might hope to meet with it again. She was filled with happiness at the vision given her by Mrs. Conant, who, as a perfect stranger, she considered could not have known her circumstances or feelings, and went away from her presence cheered by the thought that though the voice whose humble imitation of her words had served so long to while away the hours of heart loneliness had been stilled, she would surely, one day,

“Recognize its note
Among the myriad songs that float
In that great world All-Beautiful.”

V.

From the earliest moments of her accredited mediumship Mrs. Conant has been remarkably subject to the influences of spirits purporting to have been while in earth-life, members of the aboriginal tribes of North America. The investigator of Spiritualism has ere this discovered the great aid bestowed by Indian spirits, to the media of our day; but to the person reading this, who has no such knowledge, it will be well to remark, in passing, that the life of the Indian, being on earth conducted in accordance with the principles of, or in a more direct nearness to, Mother Nature, a knowledge of the control of the more subtle elements of magnetic strength seems to be possessed by his arisen spirit in a greater degree than by his white brother, whose civilization leads him further and further into the intricacies of artificial customs, appetites and fashions, till like the bow continually bent, the verve and spring of his *physique* succumbs to the constant strain, and he becomes but a walking automaton, or worse, an active "sapper and miner," demanding, with an organism famishing for the life principle, toll from every person approaching him who is so unfortunate as to be negative or sympathetic. His work is more deadly than that of the army engineer corps, in that it is accomplished secretly; in the railroad car, the church edifice, the lecture hall, the crowded thoroughfare—in all, he (or she, as the case may be) is engaged in feeding upon the magnetic vitality of those around, sapping the springs of their life, and undermining the very temple of their being, although the act is as invol-

untary on the part of the person so acting, as it is to breathe the air by which he is surrounded. Many, while not accepting the hypothesis of the transmission of the animal forces from one person to another in this subtle manner, are yet obliged to acknowledge strange feelings of weakness and lassitude attending them at times when no particular exertion has been put forth to which they could be traced; such persons have, whether they believe it or not, come into the presence of magnetic vampyres — the same being, perhaps, one of the natural fruits of an over-ripe civilization — as did Mrs. Conant, as related in a previous section — and have paid the natural penalty of the law of demand and supply.

This great want is met by the Indian element in spirit control. The red man has from the first been a spring of healing power to the exhausted media upon whom the demands of their calling rest like a heavy burden, and also upon all others who have come under his benign influence. Especially does Mrs. Conant return thanks in her heart to those of that race who have been her constant attendants and supporters in hours of physical prostration or suffering. Among the most pleasant features of her control are the unpremeditated evening sittings at her residence, where, in the presence of intimate friends, “Spring-Flower,” “Ne-os-co-le-ta,” (both young Indian maidens,) “Vashti,” a little Piegan child killed at the Wachita massacre, and others, manifest their interest in earthly affairs — while the medium is “rested” in mind and body by their loving presence. Her (Mrs. C.’s) name, “Tulular,” *i. e.*, “something to see through,” given by her Indian friends, shows the po-

sition occupied by her to them in return for their benefits. Her mediumship is similar to that of D. D. Home, in many respects. After she has been entranced an hour or two, and those present have been entertained by the invisible friends who control her physically and mentally on such occasions, on returning to consciousness she almost invariably inquires: "Who has been here? and what did they say?" She will often, without warning, become controlled, and as suddenly regain possession of her faculties; sometimes the influence holds possession for a greater period, but she rarely knows what has occurred in her presence during the time of the continuance of this state.

Naturally desirous of deciding as to the truth of the manifestations given through her, (as related to her by the friends witnessing them,) she has always improved every opportunity of testing the spirits who have presented themselves. At the time of her making the acquaintance of Colonel Tappan (husband of Cora, the celebrated spiritual lectress,) who was a member of the United States Indian Peace Commission, she became particularly desirous of knowing if the Indian influences controlling her were true in their statements. It was her wont to say, after such spirits had made use of her for speaking in their native tongue:

"How does any one know that the signs and words which Spring-Flower and others use are true and correct? I am unconscious while the manifestation is going on, and nobody present can decide whether it is sense or nonsense that is spoken through me by these Indian spirits. I do not consider the test at all satisfactory."

She therefore felt a prejudice against the use of the so-called Indian tongue through her organism. A call made at her residence by the Colonel, together with several gentlemen—among whom was one who had been a United States Indian agent for some fifteen years, and who claimed to be acquainted with a majority of the languages spoken by the aborigines on the frontier and in the interior—seemed to offer her an excellent opportunity for inquiry, as these visitors would undoubtedly be able to understand the words and signs of the reputed Indians, if correct, or decide to the contrary, if they were only—as she was half inclined to believe—a repetition of unmeaning sounds. “Spring-Flower” at once controlled, and was able to converse fluently with the quondam agent—indeed, perhaps, having the advantage of him, as he had now and then to pause till the desired word came to his memory, while his invisible collo-cutor appeared in her element. The signs heretofore made by the spirit Indians—and repeated at the present occasion—were also acknowledged to be correct by this gentleman. This afforded the strongest proof to Mrs. Conant concerning the reliability of her guides, and should also go far to awaken in the mind of the skeptic an inquiry as to the likelihood of one so poor in health, and over-worked as to time as the medium, obtaining a knowledge of the obscure dialects used by the tribes of the far West, even if she were able to make the journey there, which was impossible under the circumstances. Mrs. Conant asked one of the gentlemen of the party if he thought “Spring-Flower” could make herself understood—were she (Mrs. C.) among the Indians and entranced

— to the tribe to which she claimed to have belonged in earth life, and he answered that to his mind, she *could* beyond doubt.

In respect to this peculiarity, by which Indian dialects are so fluently rendered through Mrs. Conant, the spirit Theodore Parker has frequently assured her that it is chiefly owing to the fact that, herself being partly of Indian descent, her organs of speech are naturally fitted for their enunciation. Some preparedness, either of birth or education, is necessary to render the organs of any medium facile for the speaking of a foreign tongue. And on the other side of life, he informs her, the returning intelligence is confined to his (or her) own natural language, or to such as he has learned while on earth, *unless* he has become educated in the use of others since coming to the spirit world. In that land knowledge is not poured in baptismal streams on the head of every intelligence—there must be some desire and some exercise of the will on the part of spirits when enfranchised from mortality, if they would broaden their mental horizon and increase the scope of their attainments.

Several poems, and many beautiful prose utterances, replete with natural eloquence and power, have been given through the lips of Mrs. Conant by different Indian spirits; from among the metrical ones the following is selected. At the time of its delivery—which was at the close of an address by Mrs. Gordon, at the Melodeon, Boston, March 11th, 1866,—Mrs. C. was, as usual, unconsciously entranced. The poem was composed in spirit life, and delivered by Metoka, a remarkably intelligent Indian

squaw, mother of Winona, the subject of the poem, and wife of the sachem Wanandago, whose hunting-grounds, over two hundred years ago, included the territory on which the city of Boston is built, and whose wigwam was at the brow of the hill where the State House now stands. The chairman read a brief legend, furnished by an Indian spirit, which explains the custom that often doomed the fairest daughters of the red man to a cruel fate, as follows :

“The white man has customs ; so has the Indian. What the Indian thinks right, the white man thinks wrong. What the white man thinks right, the Indian thinks wrong.

“Many moons ago, where the white man now hunts his game, the Indian hunted his. Your big books will tell you that.

“When any two or more tribes were at war, the weaker, after two suns’ fasting, would come together in council, led by a sachem, to see what the Great Spirit would tell them to do with their young squaws, (for it was the custom of the conquering tribe to make slaves of all the young squaws, killing the old, who should fall into their hands.) At the rising of the sun, after the council had been held all night, it was the custom to call the fairest squaw of the tribe and give her the right to choose between *death* at the hands of her nearest kin, or the *risk of being captured and enslaved by the conquering tribe*. Her decision was believed to be the voice of the Great Spirit, from which there was no appeal.

“Winona, the subject of the simple poem which follows this introductory, was the first-born of the house of Wanandago, who was at the time sachem of the tribe. (The word sachem, with the Indian, means prophet, or spiritual leader.)

“The hunting-grounds of this tribe were *here*, where your many wigwams now stand ; and the wigwam of the sachem was at the brow of the hill where your great wigwam of council now stands.

“When the white man came from over the water, he hunted the Indian’s game, and gave him no return. He planted his corn on the sacred mounds of the Indian, and shed no tears — *but he gave him his fire-water!* And so the Indian grew hot against the white man, and he determined to make war with him. It was then the Great Spirit spoke to Winona, and the

arrow of Wanandago sent her to the land of sunshine and clear water, where Metoka, the fair squaw of Wanandago, had gone at the coming of Winona."

Then Metoka, in clear tones, poured forth in sweet, musical cadences, the story of

THE INDIAN MAIDEN WINONA.

- "In the sunlight, in the starlight,
In the moons of long ago —
Ere the virgin soil of Shawmut
Quivered 'neath the white man's plow;
- "Ere the great lakes and the rivers
Listened to the white man's song;
Ere the Father of all Waters
Bore them in his strong arms on;
- "On, from distant lands and wigwams,
Where the sun from slumber comes,
Where the warriors hear the warwhoop
In the voices of the drums,
- "Lived Winona — child of Nature!
First-born, beauteous, dark browed maid
At whose coming fair Metoka
Where the flowers bloom was laid.
- "Grew Winona, strong and beauteous,
Fairer than the flowers of spring;
And the echo of her sweet voice
Made the hills and valleys ring.
- "Did the red deer pass her wigwam-
Soon it quivered on the plain —
For the arrow of Winona
Never left its bow in vain!
- "Sixteen times the snow had fallen,
Sixteen times the sun grew dim,
Since the warriors and the maidens
Sung Metoka's funeral hymn.
- "Then the strange voice of the white man
Rung through all our hunting-grounds;
And their swift feet never faltered
When they neared our sacred mounds!
- "All our game their long guns hunted,
Quickly making it their own,

Heeding not the maiden's sighing,
Fearing not the warrior's frown!

"Then the voice of Wanandago
Fell in accents soft and low,
Asking, would the fair Winona
To the land of sunlight go?

"Quick the answer came, like shadows
Filling all his soul with night —
'I will go, O, mighty sachem,
Where the sky is always bright;

"Where our hunting-grounds are greater;
Where the water's always clear;
Where the spirits of our fathers
Chant the red man's hymn of cheer!"

"Soon the warriors and the maidens
Sing again their funeral song!
For the spirit of Winona
To the land of light was born!

"But to-night she comes to greet you,
Comes in meekness, comes in love;
And with gentle hands would lead you
To that land of light above;

"Where no white man robs the Indian;
Where no more the sun grows dim;
Where the warriors and the maidens
Chant no more their funeral hymn;

"In that land where stars are brighter,
Where the moonbeams softly fall,
And the great Manito's blessing,
Like the sunlight's over all;

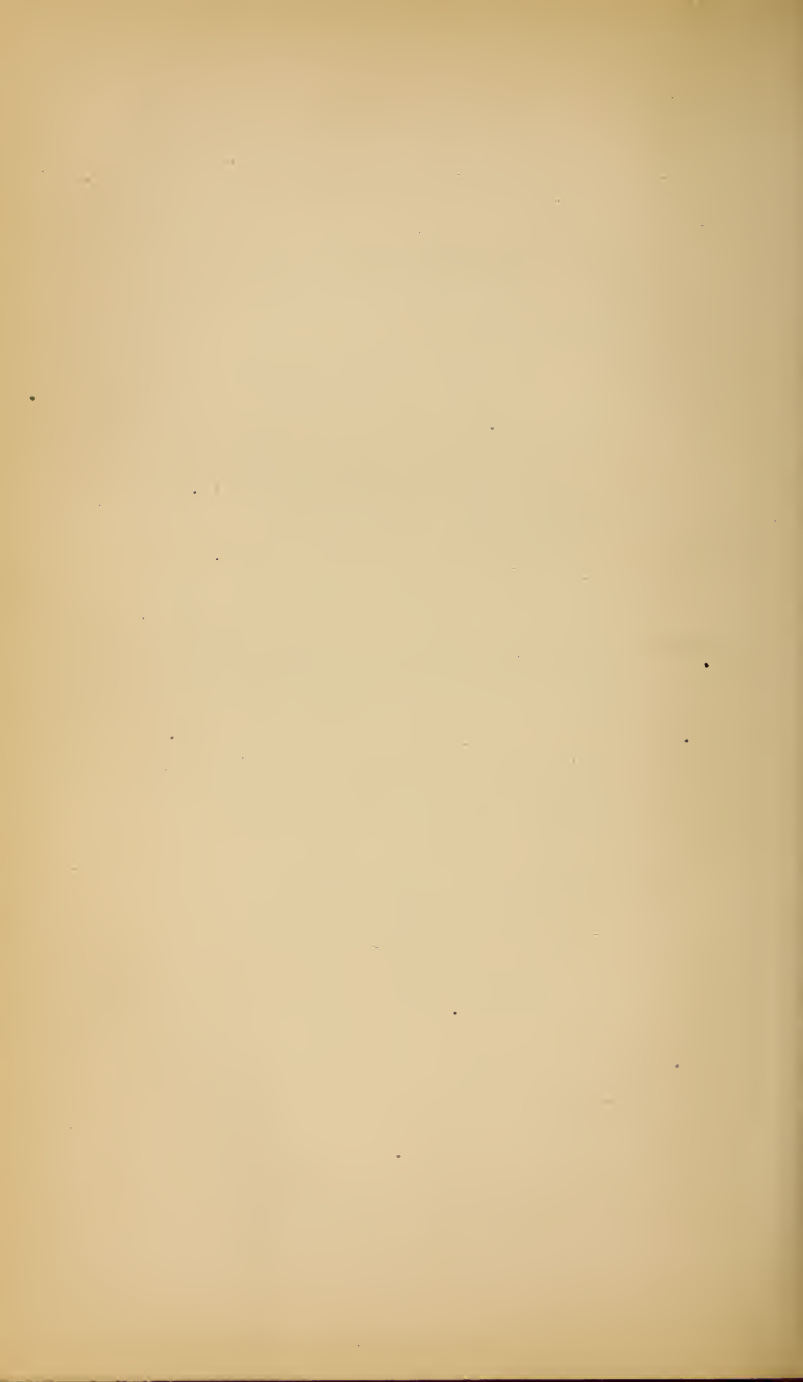
"There the Indian holds his council,
And his thoughts grow great and strong —
As the angels teach forgiveness
For the white man's fearful wrong.

"Here his tomahawk and arrows
Rest beneath your wigwams grand;
There his soul drinks in the wisdom
Of the glorious spirit-land.

"Fare you well, ye pale-faced mortals,
Till in council you shall stand,
Face to face with fair Winona,
In the Indian's Morning Land."

PART VII.

PECULIAR MANIFESTATIONS OF SPIRIT POWER.—
INTRICACIES OF CONTROL.



PART VII.

“Life, we’ve been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
’Tis hard to part when friends are dear,
Perhaps ’t will cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away — give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not “good night,” but in some brighter clime
Bid me “good morning.” — *Mrs. Barbauld.*

I.

As hinted in a preceding section, some of the most interesting manifestations of spirit existence and intelligence in the experience of Mrs. Conant have occurred, and are still taking place at her residence in the presence of herself and friends when gathered for private social converse. On such occasions, often without warning, the medium passes under control, and many spirits, who by reason of their frequent coming seem as old friends to those visiting her rooms, give their greetings—some speaking on scientific themes with any desirous of discussing them—others relating their earth experiences; many spirit children also rejoice there, as if on a play-ground in the recess of school hours. The intelligences manifesting at these impromptu circles, are by no means, however, always the same, as many stranger ones are introduced from time to time to the medium by those in the other life who have learned the path of

communion. Many important and startling facts — the majority of which the world at large is not yet ready to receive — have been communicated by those controlling at these reünions. The pages of this division of the book (Part VII.) are devoted to the detailing of many interesting incidents which have occurred at these private circles, and which have never received publicity before. They are extracted, by permission, from the diary of Dr. J. T. Gilman Pike, who has been for years the faithful friend and medical attendant of the medium. At the conclusion of each of these séances, the Doctor has, on reaching his hotel, formed the habit of transcribing their leading features, thereby preserving them ere they escaped the grasp of his memory. The giving of these messages cannot be considered as a digression; for the strongest value which accrues to the life-work of Mrs. C., arises from the pure and elevated character of the communications which have proceeded from her lips, or been written mechanically through her hand; and no account of her experiences which fails to consider this department of her labors in *all* its phases can be regarded as even approximately complete.

Many questions will arise in the mind of the enquirer who peruses this account — (as heretofore said concerning the teachings of spirits at the public circles) and such must be referred, as in the former case, to the action of his or her interior perceptions of right. The facts are here put on record with confidence on the part of the Doctor, who transcribed, and the medium through whom they were given, that future revelations as time rolls on will prepare the great

mass of society to see more clearly many points now so shrouded by doubt regarding the "solemn mystery" of the after life. The number of those is even now large, who while still beholding God's glorious Shekinah gleaming between the wings of the cherubim on the ark of the church, are yet led by their inner natures to echo the words of the candid and fearless Swedenborgian editor, who, on attending a remarkable séance for physical manifestations in the presence of another medium, published in his magazine, "*The New Church Independent*," the following tribute of acknowledgment to what shall be the hope and truth of the coming years :

"We venture no opinion upon the *modus operandi* of these phenomena, or their disorder. That they are the work of spirits, we cannot doubt. God, in his providence, knows for what good they are permitted. There is much that is fleeting, evanescent, and unsatisfactory in these physical outbreaks from the realms of spirits, which are but the foamy waves from the great ocean of spiritual existence, breaking upon the rocks and shoals of Time. We would not recall our evening with the invisible company. The memory of it will linger with us as the echoes from some sweet and pleasant dream, in which the angels came to us like those on Jacob's ladder ; where the little hands of our loved ones touched us, and their whispering voices assured us that immortality is not a fiction, but a grand and beautiful reality."

And this vantage ground gained in the hearts of the multitude in the brief space of twenty-five years, by the Spiritual Philosophy, in the face of the greatest opposition, social as well as theological, will be held and further extended among men, to the acceptance perhaps of many points which at present stagger even the judgment of the believer in the return of disembodied souls.

Casting a glance of inquiry along the pages of the Doctor's record of remarkable messages and scenes, as given through, or in presence of Mrs. Conant, the eye rests at the earliest date upon a communication given in the early spring of 1857, by a lady in spirit land, who seeing that a dark cloud of despondency hung over the soul of her husband, made haste to use all the means in her power to dispel it, and therefore improved the opportunity to manifest through the medium, shedding upon his path—as a true wife should—the light of celestial consolation :

*“To my dear companion in earth-life:—*I wish to bear a message of love, truth, and immortal affection. When the wild and angry waves of earth's sorrows dash against thy bark as it is speeding down the stream of life, fear not, for an angel is at the helm. However dark the clouds, and wild the storm, you shall land in safety. Oh, strive, my beloved one, to cast off all sorrow, and dwell in the sunshine of an angel's love; for the angels *are* with you, and they see the sombre cloud; ere long they will illumine it with golden hues. The sands in your hour-glass are now covered with darkness; oh, have faith, and they shall yet shine as fine gold. The angels are at work, and soon you shall taste of the fruits of what they are sowing. Dear one, I at this time leave my home in the realms of light and glory, to visit your dark plain, in answer to the call of *sadness*. Oh, let me not come in vain. * * * Remember, my beloved, the angels are saying:—‘Peace—be still!’ and shall not thy interior being respond ‘Amen!’ thus uniting with the loved ones as they are seeking to enshroud you with a mantle of peace? Listen, dear one; hearest thou not the soft melody in the distance, that shall ere long lull thy weary spirit to rest? If thou canst not hear, cry with a loud voice: ‘Peace, be still,’ and then shall thine ears be opened, and thy spirit be thrilled with the melody of heaven. Now the wild tumult of earth is bearing discord to the portals of the sacred temple of the soul. Arise! get thee hence; tarry not in all the plain of unbelief, for thy God will redeem thee through the power of his angels. And those are the loved ones thou hast known on earth.”

A spirit giving the name of "Eulalia," speaks to those present at one of these evening circles, informing a member as to the reason of her delay in coming. Her message urges the friend to "cheer up," and thus refers to the exceeding difficulty in the path of a spirit seeking to return, when doubt and sorrow are brooding like clouds over the individual members of the séance :

"*My friend* :—May I not call you my friend? I have for three days sought to speak with you, but in vain. *Your own dark and unhappy state formed an impassible gulf.* Why is it that you linger at the tomb of despair? 'Tis true that roses may bloom there, but the thorns are far too numerous,—therefore tread lightly, and gaze steadily beyond the tomb of the present to the resurrecting star of the future."

A spirit mother, under date of Oct. 15th, 1859, thus addresses her sons left behind. The advice herein contained, and the spirit of trust and resignation it breathes, constitute a solid paragraph in the caveat filed by Spiritualism in the courts of reason and justice against the charge of the *demoniac* origin of it and its concomitants :

"*My own dear little boys* :—What news shall I bring you from the spirit land? What fresh blossoms of love to stimulate you to duty? Shall I tell you that you still are very dear to me, and that I am just as anxious for your welfare as I was when I was with you in mortal? that I come to see you every day; am grieved when I see you doing wrong, and am very happy when I see you doing right? No! I need not tell you so, for I think your knowledge of spiritual things will teach you this, and much more. I have sometimes half wished you were with me when I have been rapt in wonder and joy as I have gazed at scenes of beauty in my new home; for all is very beautiful here to those who feel that they have tried to do right on earth. Remember this, my dears, and govern yourselves accordingly. I have pic-

tures of you both in the place I call home ; and when you are happy the pictures look very clear and beautiful, but when you are not happy, or have done anything you feel to be in any sense wrong, then I can scarcely discern the pictures, they are so overshadowed with a thick material atmosphere which they have gathered from your state or condition in earth life. So, my darlings, try, oh, try to do the best you can, and I, as well as yourselves, will be far happier than we could if you failed to live in accordance with the teachings of that ever-present monitor which the Good Father has given to guide you to peace and true happiness. That monitor is your own conscience. Obey it, and you cannot fail to be happy. It is my wish that you be kind to all you deal with—obedient to your teachers—neat concerning your persons—considerate and loving to your dear father—and, above all, ever ambitious to do right, that you may gain not only the approbation of mortals, but what is better, and far more enduring, the sunshine of approval from the dwellers in high spirit life. Remember, my dear little ones, that you are never, never alone ; and although you cannot see us, we have eyes that can see you, ears that can hear, and senses that can understand all that you do. Oh, let me often be greeted with some loving thought from the dear little boys I have left on earth. I shall prize every one as a gem of remembrance from those I so dearly love ; and although I may sometimes go far from earth, yet every thought of me from those I love will be as sure to reach me as the sun will be to rise, and bless you each morning.”

II.

In 1861 we find the Doctor recording scenes and incidents experienced at these private gatherings, which were the logical accompaniments of the great civil struggle then going on in the United States. Spirits from both armies who had passed from their bodies amid the roar of battle, and who could hardly realize the change which they had undergone—and others, who in the faint air of the crowded hospital had yielded up their lives in a deadly, hopeless stupor, and had not yet been aroused to a consciousness that for them the trials and pains of earth were over,

crowded to this avenue of communion — some led thither by friends, others drifting upon the wave of apparent chance — *apparent*, because the mind which weighs its experiences is fain to deny that there *is* in the universe such a thing as absolute chance.

Let us in the following recital raise the curtain for a moment, and enter with the power of imagination as far as may be into the feelings of one who vividly portrays his state :

“ On the evening of November 23d, 1861, Mrs. Conant was entranced, and spoke as follows :

‘ It ’s all up with me.’

After a short pause I [Dr. Pike] asked : ‘ What do you mean ?’

‘ What do I mean ! Why, it ’s all up with me. I shall never get over this. I shall never get well. Where ’s Joe ?’

‘ Joe who ?’ I asked.

‘ Why, Joe, my brother.’

‘ He is not here,’ I replied.

‘ How came *you* here ? Who got you to sit up with me ?’ he demanded.

‘ No one,’ I answered, ‘ I happened here accidentally.’

‘ Who *are* you, any way ?’

To this query I avoided a direct answer, when he continued : ‘ Where ’s that man that brings the porridge to us ? Where ’s Hollin ?’

‘ What Hollin ?’ inquired I.

‘ Why, the Doctor.’

I replied : ‘ It is sometime since he saw you.’

By these interrogations I perceived that the controlling spirit was in the dark — ignorant of his true condition — and therefore sought to enlighten him. As the first step I asked :

‘ Where are you ?’

‘ Why, here in hospital.’

‘ What hospital ?’

‘ Why, the hospital at Washington. I knew this dysentery would kill me. I ain’t afraid to die. I ’m sorry Joe left me ; I had a good many things I wanted to say to him. Well ! it ’s too late now. I don’t care about Hollin. I shan’t take any

more of his medicine. It has done me no good. I'm easy now, only very weak. I ain't afraid to die.'

I then told him that he had already passed through the change called death; that his spirit had left his body, and that he was in the spirit land, though unconscious of the fact. He was not convinced, however, declaring:

'No! this is my body. Ain't you holding me up?'

'Yes, I am holding you up,' I replied, 'but you have only temporary possession of a borrowed body. Had you ever heard anything concerning mediums and Spiritualism?'

'Yes, but then I do n't believe anything of it.'

I then went on to explain the matter to him: that he was more or less wandering in his mind during the last hours of his life, and that he had passed away in an unconscious state. This fact of 'wandering' he acknowledged. I then assured him that he had probably been brought into the presence of the medium by some relative or friend of his in the spirit land, who was anxious to awaken him to a consciousness of his condition. I inquired:

'Did you have a father, a mother, brother, or sister in spirit life?'

'Yes,' he replied, 'a mother. If she had lived, I should n't have been here.'

'Well,' I remarked, 'your kind mother watched over you in your sickness, and received your spirit on its entrance into its new home. She has brought you here to restore you to consciousness. When you leave this place, you will see her and recognize her, and then fully understand your true condition.' He gave me the name of Holbrook, of Oakland, Ill., and said his mother was a Massachusetts woman, who went west from Duxbury. He was very desirous of satisfying himself of his own identity, and thought he could if he could place his hand on his head. I assisted him, when perceiving the truth of what I said, the death scene was re-enacted, and he passed from control."

In a few moments, Mrs. Conant was restored to a normal state; but suffered severely from the influence left upon her by the spirit just departing. In order to alleviate her condition the Doctor placed her under mesmeric influence, and while in this state she saw the young man who had just controlled,

standing beside his mother — her arms about his neck — then a sister came and embraced him. In reply to the queries of the Doctor, the young man stated that all which he (Pike) had told him was true. The mother also said that she had brought her son into the presence of the medium that he might be born aright into the spirit world — *i. e.*, into a full consciousness of what he was about to undergo and enter upon.

As an additional example of the process by which the understanding of the bewildered spirit is quickened, and its mental vision cleared by coming into control of an earthly medium — from the standpoint of whose material life it seems, on yielding possession to take a new departure, more fully comprehending its changed condition, and the new duties devolving upon it — extracts from the next entry, under date of November 30th, 1861, are made. On the evening of that day, the Doctor being at the rooms of Mrs. Conant, perceived, after a spirit who had before manifested through her had retired, that another, evidently unaquainted with the method of control, was endeavoring to influence her. At last the medium, who was sitting upon a lounge near him, arose — being fully entranced — and coming to the centre of the apartment, said to the astonished physician, in accents of the deepest anguish:

“They told me you were merciful, and would give me back my child!”

The Doctor replied that he did not understand, but that if the influence would inform him of the circumstances of the case, he might be able to be of some

service. Upon hearing this, the spirit controlling exclaimed:

“They stole my child, and when I knew I could not regain possession of it, I took my life. Oh, my child, my child! They told me to come to you—that you would have mercy, and give me back my child!”

In reply to his queries, Dr. P. learned that in earth life the influence—whom the reader has by this time surmised was a woman—resided in New York; that three years had elapsed since the abduction of the child and the suicide of the mother; that the father of the child had stolen it, and that it was somewhere in spirit life, although the mother had not yet seen it.

“At this point [so runs the narrative] I [Dr. P.] comprehended the whole matter, and said to her:

‘Yes; I will give you back your child.’

‘Oh, God bless you! when—when? will it be years and years first?’ she exclaimed.

‘No,’ I replied, ‘it may be but a short time, perhaps only a few moments. My past experience justifies me in assuring you that when you give up control, and return to your spirit home, you will meet your child, if not before. It was necessary that you should come back to earth, throw off a portion of your own materiality, and receive that peculiar magnetism by which you would be enabled to come *en rapport* with your child; and some relative or friend in the spirit land has brought you here for this purpose.’”

The truth of this hypothesis was proven in her case, as just before giving up control of the organism of Mrs. Conant, the spirit raised her head, and with

clasped hands, and a countenance radiant with joy, exclaimed: "My child — my darling!" The medium in a few moments beheld in vision the reünion of the mother and her cherished offspring in spirit life. At the request of the Doctor she furnished the name she bore while on earth, which out of respect to parties now living, is not here inserted. Some beautiful floral offerings whose color language was: "Wisdom and purity," were also seen at this time by Mrs. C.; they took the form of letters which after a little space she was able to read, and which proclaimed a blessing on any who should give "unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water" even; another wreath interblended with the larger one, was seen, the inscription upon which read: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they see God even in the prostitute."

Other messages and circumstances given or occurring in 1861, are recorded, among which was a strong instance of the power of vivativeness in the mind of the individual manifesting. A spirit giving the name of Sylvanus Thompson, of St. Louis, controlled Mrs. Conant, May 26th, stating that he was killed in a mob at that city about two weeks previous, and was exceedingly anxious to regain possession of his physical body. A material love of life seemed to be at work strongly within him, and it appeared almost impossible to convince him that he could not be restored in some manner to his former physical casket. He stated that he was well provided with this world's goods while here, and that he would make any settlement desired on the Doctor, or any one who would bring him again in possession of the tenement from which he had been so suddenly ejected. This strange

dialogue continued between the two, till Capt. Gibbs (a spirit friend before referred to in these pages) seeing that Mrs. Conant was suffering under the intense excitement of the foreign control, dispossessed him of his hold, and warned those present to guard her in future as much as possible from this influence, or any intelligence of the same class, as trouble for the medium would certainly follow in their train were they allowed to gain a lodgment.

III.

By the provisions of the law of spirit control, the invisible intelligence, on first visiting a medium after return from decease, seems to bring with it a spiritual reflex of the conditions, scenes, and circumstances surrounding its former exit from materiality. This experience, however, is not repeated to an equal extent on a second visit to the same, or another instrument of communication, but the effort to control is made more easily, the hold on the medium is loosed with more understanding, and the former perturbation in the conditions is no longer perceivable. As an illustration of this unfailing law, the case of a spirit manifesting on the evening of May 14th, 1861, is given. According to the record at that time, Mrs. Conant was suddenly entranced by a spirit who exhibited symptoms of hydrophobia, the medium foaming at the mouth and snapping at those present. Whenever her physician attempted to touch her face or throat, these signs were repeated with considerable violence. The Doctor was at first in doubt as to whether these manifestations were the result of a foreign influence, or were caused by some physical

derangement existing in the medium; but upon putting the question: "Is some spirit in control?" he saw an evident attempt at a reply—the intelligence, however, being unable to use the organs of speech. After a time, the control becoming more perfect, an affirmative answer was rendered, with the ejaculations made in a manner that indicated much suffering:

"Oh, had I known how hard it was, I never would have attempted it. I want to get away. Let me go!"

Other expressions of a similar nature being given vent to, Dr. P., asked the intelligence concerning its identity, name, condition, etc., and if he, the Doctor, could be of service in any way. No reply was received, however. From the moment he became satisfied that the manifestations taking place before him were the result of spirit control, the Doctor was impressed with regard to the character of the case, and as to who the party was. With a view to ascertaining the correctness of his impression he put the question:

"How long have you been in the spirit land?" to which the influence replied: "Only a few months."

"Did you not live at South End, on Shawmut Avenue or near by, and die of hydrophobia?" To this the spirit promptly replied that both suppositions were correct; he also repeated his request that the Doctor would assist him in getting free from the medium, which being acceded to, by the exercise of mesmeric power on the part of the physician, the control was broken, and Mrs. Conant returned to consciousness; she complained immediately of an unpleasant feeling about the region of the throat, and

said that her face felt as if it were "all drawn up." A few minutes later she attempted to drink a preparation from a glass on the mantlé, but was seized with a spasm as soon as the effort was made, and cried out: "*What* a pain in the back of my neck!" Another attempt, made some five minutes later, met with no better success—the spasm being even more severe than before. She was then thrown into a magnetic state by Dr. P., from which in some ten minutes she awoke without further unpleasant effects from the conditions left upon her by her strange visitant.

It not infrequently occurs that spirits coming near a medium out of sympathy for the intelligence influencing him or her, become suddenly drawn into control upon the yielding up of the first one, and are obliged to manifest—if only for a brief moment—in order to disengage themselves. An incident of this kind—not, however, in chronological order—is found in a message from Hon. Anson Burlingame, received at the rooms of Mrs. Conant on Tuesday evening, Aug. 22d, 1871, by a company composed of Luther Colby, Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Wilson, and Dr. Pike. Here, after the departure of a spirit whose birth-land was in the far East "where the sun comes from," (and to whom Mr. B. was strongly attracted on account of his official position while in life) the former chief plenipotentiary for China made his appearance through the medium, stating that it was not his intention to manifest on coming there, but that being intensely desirous of examining into the *modus operandi* of the law of control as regarded the experience of others, he found himself, ere he was aware, in posses-

sion. He did not understand why it occurred ; but the matter was explained to him by the party — from previous information given by other returning spirits — that his great interest in the mode of influencing the medium brought him unconsciously within her magnetic sphere, and he became, so to speak, *absorbed* into her organism.

Spirits who trod the gloomy, fear-haunted road of suicide, have left the traces of their return on the pages of this record. Wrapped in a mantle of doubt as to themselves and all around them, they have stumbled on, till through the humble door of modern mediumship they have beheld the first faint gleam betokening that new dawn of hope which a God of eternal progression gives to each child of his, however great his or her mistakes in life may have been :

On the evening of January 3d, 1862, Mrs. Conant began to exhibit extraordinary symptoms which were at first thought by her physician to be the result of a neuralgic affection from which she had been suffering all day, but it finally transpired that they were the efforts of a returning spirit to manifest. Several spasms occurred,—each becoming more severe than the preceding—and at length the Doctor fearing that so violent a control would result in harm to the medium, determined to dispossess the influence by taking possession himself—in other words by mesmerizing her. Upon placing his hand upon her head for this purpose, she was instantly restored to consciousness, with eyes open and power to speak, but under the full and perfect control of a spirit who, before yielding possession, stated that her name on earth

was Lucy Pendleton, of Auburn, N. Y. The spirit's first inquiry was :

"How long did I sleep?"

At this time the Doctor was not fully aware of the presence of the spirit, but supposing that Mrs. C. had addressed this question to him, answered: "About ten minutes."

"Ten minutes!" replied the influence, with signs of impatience, "do you think I'm a fool?"

"No," he replied, "but we evidently do not understand each other."

"Just my luck! Oh dear! dear! How disappointed I am. I thought I was going to die, but here I am," murmured the spirit, almost weeping.

"Tell me something about yourself; perhaps I can give you some light in regard to your condition, for you seem at present to be in the dark concerning it," said Dr. P., "I think I can aid you if you will talk with me."

"Who did they call in? What day is it?" demanded the influence.

"Friday."

"What date in the month?"

"The third of January, 1862."

"There! I knew I had slept more than ten minutes."

The Doctor then asked: "What is the last date you recollect?"

"The second of September — I dated all my letters on that day."

"What did you do then?"

"Took laudanum to kill myself; but 'tis just my luck — I either took too much or not enough," said the spirit.

The state of the case now appearing to the company, her true condition was explained to her; she was informed that she *had* succeeded in taking her own life and had passed into the spirit world; that she had remained in an unconscious state up to the present time; that she had probably been brought into magnetic relations with Mrs. Conant—as many others had previously been — by some friends in the other life, for the purpose of obtaining a clearer view of her position. The influence replied :

“I do n’t know how I came here. No one brought me here. I saw no one.”

“Have you any friends or relatives in the spirit land who were dear to you here?”

This question being answered in the affirmative, she was again informed that some spirit friend must have brought her there for purposes of good to her; but she stoutly maintained that she had not seen any of her friends in the land of souls; the only point analogous to it in her mind was that she had *dreamed* that she saw her father and mother, and that they told her, she must go back to earth and stop awhile. She was still incredulous with regard to what was told her about her possessing temporarily the body of another till a mirror was brought her, when she exclaimed :

“Oh yes; I see you are right. This is *not* my body. *My* hair was light and short; this is black and long. How long must I stay here?”

“You can go when you please,” replied Dr. P.; “I will aid you when you desire to go.”

“Oh, dear! I dread to go! How strange! I did not fear when I killed myself, but now I do.”

Before her departure, in reply to the Doctor's query of what she did as to occupation while on earth, she said :

“ What did I do ? I tried to live — I did as other folks do — not any worse, I don't think.”

Two touching narratives of suicides are appended in this connection as instances of the graphic power of these messages, coming as they do from the depths of the heart of those giving them. On the evening of February 26th, 1863, Mrs. Conant, after being influenced by several spirits, passed finally under the control of one who spoke as follows :

“ My name was Eliza Craft, of London, Eng. My father was a physician. My mother died about three years previous to my decease. My father was almost frantic at her death. I committed suicide by taking prussic acid and alcohol. I had some little knowledge of medicine, and knew well what to take to pass out quickly. I did not suffer. The cause for this dreadful act was seduction and abandonment by my father's student. But oh, he is wretched — cursed — doubly cursed ! My own situation is more tolerable than his.

I was about nineteen years of age when I died. My father was in the habit of keeping open house during the holidays. Everything was in readiness for our friends and guests ; but when they came, it was to attend my funeral. Their joy was turned into mourning. When my father came into his office and found me dead, I stood there [in spirit] and knew his agony. Oh my God ! what would I not have given to have returned ! ”

For some moments the influence appeared greatly distressed by this glance in retrospect at her past history, after which she proceeded to say that sometime subsequent to her transition, her father found portions of her writings from which he inferred the cause of her death, but took no legal steps with regard to the young man. He simply told him to go from his presence — he wished never to see him again.

On Wednesday, P. M., April 27th, 1864, Mrs. Conant was entranced. The spirit seemed but little inclined to converse, but after awhile, gave the name of Edith Elkins, and said she had been in the spirit land about six weeks. Becoming at last more communicative, she spoke as follows:

“My parents reside in Alton, Ill. My father is a lawyer. Three years ago I was at school in Cleveland, O. I knew nothing, then, of care or sorrow. The typhus and typhoid fever appeared among the pupils; many were prostrated, and, after long suffering, died. I was among the number who were taken down with the disease, but was spared—Oh God! why was it?—only to be disgraced and overwhelmed with sorrow. I was seduced by my physician. I was happy for a year or two, believing that he loved me, and was true to me. One morning, when I awoke, his marriage to another was announced to me. The shock was terrible! I could live no longer. It seems now that an unseen power—fate perhaps—ruled the events of my life. A short time before this, I had jokingly requested to be allowed to keep with me a small phial of medicine, (poison) remarking that perhaps I *might* desire to take it; but the thought of ever doing so never at that time entered my mind. From this phial I took the fatal dose. I have been told that he was at my bedside while I was dying, and that his agony was terrible. I am also told that he lies very sick at Cleveland—not expected to recover. [He was afterward clairvoyantly seen by the medium—June 22d, 1864—in a dying condition.]

The news of my death by violence, quite overwhelmed my parents. My father, a few days after, was stricken down with paralysis. My mother is sustained by her Christian faith.”

IV.

The pages of the record bear many other interesting accounts which are not here inserted. According to the narrative, at these private sittings wonderful spirit manifestations of an intellectual type have been given, by all classes of disembodied ones, from the cultured Zandes, who claims to have existed on earth 7000

years ago — and Jacho Reida Yan Can, an intelligent merchant of Calcutta — to “Oriole,” a gypsy from the Isle of Wight, and “Big Buffalo,” from the prairies of the West: Here “Shining Water,” an Indian maiden, bringing news of a great council of war being held at the moment of her manifesting by many chiefs and braves in “the land where the sun sleeps,” longs to “visit and whisper peace to them, and tell them the Great Spirit loves peace rather than war:” Here Maximillian, breathing that air of spiritual progress which is free to the humblest peon as well as to the lordliest king speaks with newly opened vision — “Mortals contend for bubbles here, which break upon the shores of eternity and are gone. The night of death and the morning of a more perfect day are so near that we can see no space between them. I died as a soldier dies:” Here the wise of other days reveal the fact that the word “sin,” when traced through the ages to its source or root in the primitive languages of men, signifies “unripeness:” Here those who have defrauded their kind on earth, bear witness that by the action of the eternal law of Infinite Retribution the consequences of their deeds followed them to the land of souls, unstayed in their effects by a belief in the atoning blood of any person, human or divine: Here such asseverate that it is necessary for their deliverance from the results of past misdeeds, for them to return to earth, confess the wrong, and make what reparation they may, upon the execution of which penance, their load of guilt—like the pack of “Christian”—falls away, and leaves them free to the pursuit of higher attainments: Here those who have

gone down into the deep, deep sea, have returned—the captain yet wrapped in that hardy defiance of the elements which was his pride, shouting out involuntarily the last orders he gave on earth; the wife who sank with him amid the swirling wreck, happy to be even in that supreme hour by her husband's side; the humble man of the fore-castle, breathing an uncouthly-worded regret that his mother, or wife, or sweetheart it may be, “will feel desperate bad” when she learns he is dead: Here the miser, “a poor miserable looking fellow, all shriveled and dried up,” shows his true character in the land beyond, going about begging and holding out his hand even to him who was a pauper in earth-life but who is *now* richer than he—every spirit in his path shrinking from him in disgust. Here the spirit of Mrs. Judson, the celebrated missionary, on beholding a beautiful bouquet, the gift of a friend, upon a stand near her while controlling the medium, proclaims:

These floral gems in kindness given —
They speak to me of yonder heaven!
For in their perfumed hearts I see
Reflected, much of Deity.

Some say that Allah dwells apart
From Nature and the human heart;
But Nature claims her right to be
The dwelling place of Deity.

Then let us worship at the shrine
Of Nature, in her courts divine!
Nor Allah seek, nor Christian's God,
To aid our steps along the road!

V.

The Indian influences briefly referred to in the preceding part, are here spoken of to a greater length :

“SPRING FLOWER.”

This lively and intelligent influence came to Mrs. Conant in the early days of her mediumship, impersonating a child in whom acquisitiveness and curiosity were largely developed — a peculiar characteristic of her control being, her request for small articles of finery, etc., in possession of those present, which pleased her fancy. On the medium's expostulating with the influence, on obtaining consciousness, that such conduct was unbecoming, she finally abandoned the practice, but revenged herself upon Mrs. C. by entrancing her suddenly on one or two occasions and causing her to make a rapid flight through the crowded streets of the city till overtaken and brought back by friends.

In time this Indian maiden assumed the position of attendant spirit to the medium, being ever ready at call to assist her as a messenger — bringing to the circles any spirit whose presence was required therein, and on several occasions at the public séances held by her at Mrs. Cate's, lifting chairs for the accommodation of the guests, or raising or closing the windows. This was done in the light, much to the mystification of skeptics present, who could not deny that the articles were moved, though the act could be ascribed to no visible agent.

This influence gave Mrs. Conant a sketch of her earth life, in which she stated that she was of the

Sioux tribe — that she committed suicide, and that she was known among the Indians by a name which signifies: “The-one-who-shows-herself,” as she was frequently seen, in spirit, near the spot where she met her death. After awhile “Spring-Flower” gave notice that she should soon cease to be a regular attendant upon Mrs. Conant — having other duties to discharge, and astonished the medium by informing her that she would bring her a little Indian girl from the Plains to take her place. In reply to Mrs. C.’s query as to whether the child would be a spirit out of, or one *in* the form, she was assured that it was to be one yet in physical life. This Mrs. Conant considered as simply impossible, and gave the subject no further thought, but was exceedingly surprised, on Colonel Tappan’s arrival in Boston from another visit to the far West to find that he had brought back with him a little Indian child whom he found in one of the mission schools, and whose parents and friends perished in the Sand Creek (or Chivington) massacre. He proceeded to introduce his charge to the inmates of the house — Mrs. Conant among them — and, at once, “Spring-Flower” controlled, declaring to those around her that her promise was fulfilled — that she *had* brought the medium an Indian girl in her place, and she must keep her.

“What can *I* do with her?” asked Mrs. C., on coming out of the trance, and being told what “Spring-Flower” had said. The Colonel, nevertheless, decided, through the invitation of the lady of the house, to leave the girl — who was then supposed to be about ten years of age — with her, at least till other quarters could be obtained, and the aboriginal waif

took up her residence under the tutelary care of the medium.

“Spring-Flower” did not immediately abandon the presence of Mrs. Conant upon the arrival of her “substitute,” but shortly after, her visits became less frequent, and she now manifests only at intervals through her organism. On one occasion Colonel Tappan being desirous of testing the truth of her assertions concerning her people, and Indian matters generally, brought a collection of arrows which he had obtained while in the West—he knowing the particular bands by whom they were used; these upon being subjected to the medium’s examination while entranced by “Spring-Flower” were correctly assorted, and each tribe named, by the workmanship or peculiar marks described thereon by the keen-eyed child of nature.

“Minnehaha,”—(which was the name given to the little Indian child, at the school from which she was taken by Colonel Tappan)—was straight as an arrow, and well developed as to form; after a few experiments, she also demonstrated that she was possessed of a tractable mind. She made rapid progress in her studies, and at her earnest request a music teacher was engaged to instruct her in the mysteries of the piano forte, in the use of which instrument she, in time, became quite proficient. The experience of Mrs. Conant with regard to her, proved the utter fallacy—to her mind—of the idea that civilization and education are impossible of attainment by the Indian. The child exhibited a willingness to obey all directions given her, seeming to have the most implicit confidence that Mrs. C. knew best, and

would not demand aught of her, which it was wrong for her to perform; she faithfully kept her promises, and showed a determination to speak the truth under all circumstances, which it would be well to have more fully copied among the scions of the favored white race. She was, at first, given to wild freaks—the most remarkable of which, was leaping into the water with all her clothing upon her, and swimming with the greatest ease, though to the destruction of the various dresses with which she was supplied by Colonel Tappan—and when reproved or corrected, she bore all without complaint (though the sullenness peculiar to her people would at such times manifest itself;) she finally became deterred from such exhibitions of untamed nature, and was led to assume in a full degree the manners of civilized life.

This child was found to be a medium, or at least to be possessed of clairvoyant powers, which fact was discovered in the following manner: She on several occasions desired that she might be allowed to remain and go “up stairs” to bed when the older ones did, and showed great trouble of mind on being refused; at last she was questioned upon the matter, and replied that an Indian always sat at the foot of her bed when she went up alone, and looked at her so that she was frightened.

“Do you know him?” asked Mrs. C.

“Yes; and *I should be glad to see him if he wasn't dead,*” murmured the child.

“Who is he?”

“Omwah — my father.”

The medium at once endeavored to explain to her that the act of death was nothing more to her inner

and real self than the putting off of the garments with which civilized life had clothed her limbs — that she ought to be glad to see her father under any circumstances — that he came to her because of his love for her, and could not possibly be productive of harm.

The time of “Minnehaha’s” stay with Mrs. Conant by reason of its pleasantness, gradually lengthened till nearly eighteen months passed away, when the little one was removed by reason of the Colonel’s marriage.

The following account of the tuition of an uneducated spirit may prove of interest to the student of the occult in mental development :

“NE-OS-CO-LE-TA.”

“This beautiful and affectionate spirit came to me [Dr. Pike] for the first time about ten years ago, personifying in her control [through Mrs. Conant] one perishing from hunger and cold. The lady medium was sitting at the time upon a hassock in the middle of the room. Just at the moment of her being entranced by the spirit, her husband came into the apartment, having on his dressing gown and slippers, the bright colors of which seemed at once to attract the attention of the spirit. Shivering with cold, and famished with hunger, she gave him an imploring look, which I can never forget, and which seemed to say :

‘I have no blanket — no food ; will the white man give ?’

He at once took off his gown and placed it upon her shoulders — his slippers, and put them upon her feet. Some hard biscuit which were in a closet near by, were brought and given to her. She devoured them as only one starving could. Seemingly satisfied, she soon yielded control, and was followed by another, an Indian maiden, who is known to us as ‘Spring-Flower,’ and who is in the habit of controlling the medium occasionally. She told me that she brought the little pappoose who had just gone ; that she perished on the Plains, and was covered beneath the snow ; that her people were driven from their lodge by the pale-faces, and having no food, and being unable to continue the flight, this little one faltered and perished. The name she now bears : ‘Woo-ne-a-noo-ket,’ was given her by those who

received her into spirit life, and signifies in English : 'She-that-was-under-the-snow ;' the name she bore in her earth life was 'Ne-os-co-le-ta,' which denotes 'Prairie Flower.' By this name we now call her most frequently. In the course of a few days she came again, and manifested much gratitude for the kindness shown her at her first coming. After this her calls were frequent, and I soon discovered that she possessed a very confiding and loving nature. Up to this time she could only communicate with me by signs. I began teaching her to make her wishes known in English, by speaking the names of various things in the room, and making her repeat them after me several times, until she could pronounce them distinctly. The lady medium having a ring upon her finger, and the attention of the spirit child being attracted to it, I spoke the word 'ring,' and asked her to repeat it after me ; this she did, very imperfectly at first, but after three or four attempts, she enunciated it very clearly and distinctly. I then spoke each letter separately : 'r-i-n-g,' and asked her to repeat them after me, which she did. I went on, giving her other names — as 'hand,' 'arm,' 'head,' 'hair,' 'ear,' 'eye,' etc., she learning the words and their orthography correctly.

I then asked her if she would like to learn the 'pale-face' books? She seemed perfectly delighted with the idea, and signified that she would. I told I would get such a book as was suitable for her, and bring it the next time I called on the lady. I bought a primer and took it with me at my next call. The little one controlled, remaining in possession of the medium for less than one hour, during which time she mastered every letter of the alphabet in capitals, and could call them rightly wherever she saw them. At our next meeting she learned to spell some words of one syllable, and to designate the letters of the alphabet which formed the word. She also learned the small letters of the alphabet. Soon she was able to read short sentences. I next taught her the characters used in writing — all of which letters, both large and small she mastered in one evening. She had now a good foundation laid. At all our subsequent meetings, when the medium was well, and the spirit could control, some progress was made, either in reading or writing, and frequently in both."

The following letter written by the hand of Mrs. Conant while she was entranced by his little pupil,

was received by the Doctor, as a mark of the gratitude of "Prairie Flower: "

"My Dear Dr. Pike:— Me love you much, so me write you to thank you for your kind heart towards the Indian child. You give her the thoughts which the Great Father has given you in books, and she will weave them into a chaplet with which to crown you in your spirit home. Me will try to be good, and do all you tell me. Me will try not to forget. Me will try to get many stars, so when me come to show you the way when the Great Father calls, it will not be dark. Me will love you much, and will ask the water and the flowers, the sunlight and the starlight to take my prayers to the Great Father for you. Me be
WOONEANOOKET."

"VOOSH-TI."

This influence — an Indian child, aged about seven years in earth life — first controlled Mrs. Conant in 1870, as she was slowly recovering from the depressing effects of a serious illness. Her name while embodied in the physical was "Voosh-ti" — meaning "The Captive," but it being comparatively difficult of pronunciation by white lips, it was gradually changed by those attending the private séances to "Vashti," by which she is now known. Totally ignorant of reading, writing, and other branches of education so common to civilized life — as was "Ne-os-co-le-ta" at her first manifestation — "Vashti" has been, and is now, under process of education, with good results.

On coming she represented herself to be one of the Piegan tribe, and reported that she perished at the Indian massacre by the troops of Gen. Sheridan, which occurred on the Yellow Stone River in December, 1869. Her father, "Big Buffalo," one of the under chiefs of the tribe, was killed at the same time. Subse-

quently the following information regarding her was obtained: A woman from the State of Illinois, who, with a party of emigrants, was crossing the plains to California, became a captive to the Indians. Two men — “Big Buffalo” and one of his warriors — desired her for a wife. Lots were cast, and she fell to the possession of the chief. His Indian wife, full of jealousy and anger, strove in all safe ways to exhibit her hatred of the new comer. In time the said Indian squaw was delivered of a child, but it was so strangely marked that she hated it from its birth. A person understanding the great effect of pre-natal influences upon a child about to be born, will not be surprised to learn that this Indian pappoose partook in a great measure of the nature of the white wife — in consequence of the continued thought of its mother during the gestative period — and resembled a white child far more than an Indian. The squaw detested it heartily — named it “Voosh-ti” (the captive) in derision of her white rival, whom it resembled, and endeavored on several occasions to kill it; but the white wife, having taken a fancy to the oppressed little one, defended it in every instance. Up to the time of its violent death at the hands of the cavalry, the child was noted as being remarkably intelligent, exceedingly active, and easily taught — being a favorite with the soldiers and officers at the neighboring fort, who often made her presents of food, or small articles which attracted her attention.

She frequently, at her first coming as a spirit, entranced the medium while she was at meals, and partook of the food set before her, which resulted in

good to Mrs. C., by bringing nourishment into her system when the appetite of the medium — had she been in a normal state — would have failed to tempt her to partake of any food. Since first controlling the medium, she has continued to be a constant attendant on Mrs. C. — being almost a case of semi-reincarnation in her assiduous attention and close proximity to her earthly friend. Among Vashti's characteristics of manifestation is a passionate fondness for playing at cards; while in possession of the medium's organism, she will participate in games requiring the keenest exercise of the mental powers, and with the rules of which the medium is totally unacquainted.

Vashti has discharged faithfully many of the duties formerly devolving on "Spring-Flower," being often successfully despatched as a messenger for spirits whose presence was desired, and frequently warning the medium of approaching trouble. Among the many other instances which have occurred, proving the celerity of motion, deep affection, and quickness of judgment possessed by this spirit, the following leaves from Mrs. Conant's experience while on her recent tour to Moravia are cited: While at this place, with a view of witnessing some of the remarkable manifestations occurring in presence of Mrs. Andrews, it was found — owing to the disturbed conditions incident to the medium's having recently removed from the Keeler mansion to her new residence — that the usually satisfactory séances were interspersed with those which proved almost total failures — the one attended by Mrs. Conant verging upon the latter character, as regarded the materialization of spirit

forms, though the dark circle which preceded the "materializing séance" was a success as far as brilliant spirit lights, spirit voices, etc., could make it. During this darkness Mrs. Conant requested a manifestation from "Vashti"—no one in the room save herself and traveling companions knowing whether said spirit was full grown or infantile. At once the cabinet door was heard to open, and the sound of little feet running across the floor was detected. In a moment more a form bounded into Mrs. C.'s lap; it was that of a child, so tangible that she put her arms around it and felt it firmly grasped between them. The persons next to Mrs. Conant in the circle also satisfied themselves of the reality of the spirit's presence by pressing its small, soft hand. It climbed up, and placed its arms about Mrs. C.'s neck, kissing her affectionately, after which she felt the form dissolve and melt away.

At the conclusion of her stay at Moravia, Mrs. Conant purposed to proceed at once to Niagara Falls, and commenced the journey, but finding her health failing, even to the verge of a dangerous sickness, she decided on leaving Syracuse, N. Y., where she had halted, and proceeding at once to Boston as soon as her physician, [Dr. Pike,] who had been summoned by telegraph, could arrive to accompany her. On the morning after his coming, it was found that if removed at all that day she must travel in the gentlest manner possible, and application was therefore made at the dépôt for a section in a palace car. Information was returned that the eastward train from Chicago generally had a car of that description attached, though it was by no means a matter of certainty—

neither was there any surety, should said train (then nearly due) have such a car coupled with it, that a section could be secured, as it was almost always filled to repletion. In this dilemma, not wishing to make the journey from the hotel to the dépôt in vain, Mrs. C. decided to send her little friend "Vashti" to discover whether such a car was with the coming train, and if so, whether any vacancy existed therein. The spirit departed upon her errand, and after the lapse of some twenty minutes returned, reporting that she had been "down the track" a long way — that a palace car was on the advancing train, and that *one* section of four seats was vacant — which fact she learned by looking upon the special conductor's check book. Mr. Berry immediately controlled Mrs. C., ordering the party to go to the dépôt at once, and wait for the train, and directing her gentleman escort to leap upon the car before it was fairly stopped, see the conductor and secure the coveted seats ere some one preceded him in the race. This was done, as per programme — the seats were secured, and Mrs. Conant, led by "Vashti," went immediately to the proper section ("C") — although she did not know which one (if any) had been secured — not having had an opportunity of communicating with her escort since he went on board the car.

“METOKA.”

The following poem was improvised at one of these private sittings through the lips of Mrs. Conant, by “Metoka,” (a brief description of whose nativity is given in the preceding part) and addressed to Dr. Pike, in memory of his domestic bereavements; in acknowledgment of his services in aiding in the restoration to health of Mrs. C., after a severe illness; as a promise of what she (Metoka) would do for him in reward, when he passed the river of change; and as a prophecy of what he would accomplish for the race in mortal when himself disembodied:

METOKA TO DR. PIKE.

“Had the white man wearied of Metoka’s coming? The upper hunting-ground is large, and Metoka has wandered many miles since last she met the white man.

Kneel and kiss the Hand of Power,
Though your human tear-drops flow,
Know you not their sadd’ning shower
Saved you from still darker woe?

Long the Indian maid has watched you
On our spirit prairie’s rim,
As your lessening camp fires smouldered —
One by one your lights grew dim.

When the last, the best, the brightest,
Drooped in misty shades forlorn,
And her weary, wounded spirit
Fled from earth like frightened fawn:*

Then the Indian in her wigwam
Knelt in deep, though voiceless prayer,
Asking that the great Manito
This one star-beam † still would spare.

* Referring to the decease of Abbie, the Doctor’s second wife, spoken of in preceding pages.

† Referring to a severe, and almost fatal illness which overtook Mrs. Conant, but which the skill of Dr. P. was a powerful agent in overcoming, so that she was restored to health.

Through the life-tide of *your* being —
 Through its pulses full and warm,
 Came in earnest tones the answer,
 And the Indian's heart grew strong.

Then there rose a song of gladness
 From the millions robed in night,
 For the great All-Father spared them
 This, their trembling beacon light.

Guard its radiance, feed it truly
 From the fountains of your life,
 And the angel world will bless you
 When you're free from mortal strife:

Then in land of spirit promise,
 In the wigwam of the blest;
 Where the forest trees are greenest —
 Where no human foot hath pressed —
 There I'll meet thee in death's twilight,
 While the stars above us glisten
 And the moonbeams round us fall;
 And the leaves all seem to listen
 To the great Manito's call!

And from hence my hand shall guide thee
 Over broadening lake and stream,
 Over plain and towering mountain,
 Till before thine eye shall gleam
 Wisdom's dome o'erarching all things;
 And the shadows of existence
 Into blessings then shall turn;
 And truth's watch-fires from the distance
 With a nearing light shall burn:

Burn within thy heart's recesses —
 Burn till all the dross shall die,
 Till thine anxious soul possesses
 Knowledge from the source on high —
 And beyond the thing once cherished
 Soars to home of angels glorious,
 But no joys of heaven shall bind;
 Thou to earth shall speed victorious,
 Earnest work for man to find.

Thou shalt work for poor and lowly —
 For the sinner and the saint;
 Rest o'er weary spirits breathing —
 Strength imparting to the faint.
 Then thy mortal mission ended,

This thy song with angels blending,
 Shall proclaim in courts of heaven :
 'Peace on earth to man ascending —
 Peace forever more is given !' ”

The following, replete with the inculcations of the gospel of reason, was given by “Metoka” on another occasion :

“Ask no priest, ye toiling mortals,
 If the angels can return.
 Rather light your lamps of knowledge
 Where the fires of wisdom burn —

Burn alike for saint and sinner —
 Jew and Gentile — great and small ;
 Teaching from broad Nature's record :
 Man is free in Reason's hall.

To that portal bring your problems ;
 Reason solves them one and all ;
 For she holds the key of heaven,
 And she wears no funeral pall,

But her garments are all glorious
 As the bow that spans the sky.
 On the heart of each she traceth :
 'Souls immortal cannot die.'

Then since light and life eternal
 To each human soul is given,
 Who shall circumscribe its limits
 To the spirit land called heaven ?

Not the God of ancient Sinai —
 Not the Christian's God of Love (?) —
 For to man is given dominion
 Over all below — above !

Freedom's pean, Nature's anthem
 Each enfranchised spirit sings ;
 And to bear your loved ones earthward,
 Peace and truth shall lend them wings.

Dwell no longer in the shadow,
 Where the tomb-walls close around.
 Rise ! and twine your wreathes of welcome,
 For your dead — your lost are found ! ”

In this individual record — whose perusal we now conclude — prepared by Dr. Pike without the slightest anticipation of its ever reaching the public eye, human life in all its variations of light and shade is traced as presented at these private séances for analysis by this wondrous mediumistic spectroscope ; and from the lessons deduced by the process flow confirmation for the doubter, strength for the weak, encouragement for the despondent — certainty for faith, and a glorious looking forward to the “good morning” of eternity, in place of sad forebodings at the “good night” of death !

PART VIII.

MISCELLANEOUS MANIFESTATIONS OF SPIRIT INTELLIGENCE.—THE HERMIT OF THE POWOW.



PART VIII.

Come to us the friends who vanished —
Left us weeping on the shore;
Eden's garden find the banished,
Eat and live forevermore!—*William Denton.*

I.

ON a certain occasion, while Mrs. Conant was residing at the Cummings House, Boston, she received a call from a stranger gentleman, who announced himself as desirous of investigating the phenomena of spirit return, but said that he wished a particular test of identity from a friend of his, which he had never been able to obtain; he had just visited a lady medium in another part of the city, and had there been told by the influence controlling, that the desired manifestation could not be given through her, but that if he would have a sitting with Mrs. Conant (the spirit giving him full directions as to where he could find her,) his friend would endeavor to grant his request. Although rather undecided in his mind as to the further pursuit of the subject, the gentleman concluded to essay one more trial, and accordingly made his appearance at the residence of Mrs. C., as per recommendation. Having taken seats at the table, the medium and her visitor became passive to the influences, and awaited the result. Mrs.

C., as was her wont when anticipating the coming of spirits, held in her hand a pencil, and had spread before her a sheet of paper, in order that should the invisible intelligence not wish to entrance her, it might express its ideas in writing. Suddenly her hand began to rise and fall in a singular and very irregular manner, and the pencil continued for some moments to make a ticking sound upon the paper, for which it was wholly beyond the power of the medium to account. Finally, despairing of any influence controlling, and much confused as to the apparent failure of the séance, she said to her visitor :

“It’s of no use. There seems to be no spirit present at this time who can communicate with you. There *is* one here, but it is evidently ignorant of the method of return, and cannot get full control.”

She expected, in her chagrin, that the investigator would express his dissatisfaction and retire, convinced in his mind that spirit communion—as far as the medium was concerned, at least,—was a fable; but she was exceedingly surprised when he quietly informed her that he was perfectly satisfied—that the séance had been an entire success—that he had received the test he desired from his friend, and had written it out for preservation, unnoticed by her. On further explanation, it appeared that the visitor was a telegraphic operator, and that the matter he desired to be informed about by his friend just passed away (who was also an operator) was of a nature known only to themselves; this information the friend in the form wished the disembodied one on meeting him in presence of, or through the medium, to give by means of the *telegraphic ticks* used in the transmission of

mundane messages. This the influence had accomplished mechanically through the pencil of Mrs. Conant while she in a normal state — and totally ignorant of the telegraphic alphabet — was wondering at the failure of the spirit to transcribe something which could be read. Thus the entire freedom of the channel of communication from any knowledge of the matter given was clearly and satisfactorily proven to the gentleman.

One evening, while she was residing at the same hotel, it so chanced that the room contiguous to that of herself and husband, was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Gillett — the latter being also a medium. Over the door of each room was a square aperture for the purpose of ventilation, which was closed by means of a swinging window. On this occasion, when both parties had retired, the window above the door of Mrs. Conant's apartment began to be strangely agitated, and was violently opened, and allowed to fall again, several times, creating so much disturbance that Mr. Conant, after listening in vain for any sound in the hall which should betray the perpetrators, concluded that "the spirits" must be at work, and accordingly arose and fastened the offending sash so that no further difficulty could occur in that direction. Hardly, however, had he again retired, when a spoon, which was placed in a glass near the bed, from which Mrs. C. had previously taken the contents, began a lively "tattoo," and, ringing like a bell, awoke the indignation of the husband for a second time. Having secured the offending utensil and placed it in a closet in the room, he again lay down to repose. Loud knocks succeeded,

and then Dr. Fisher controlling Mrs. Conant, informed her husband that the noises were owing to the close proximity of two such mediums as his wife and Mrs. Gillett—that the unseen intelligences of a playful order had discovered that they could concentrate more force than usual in that locality, and were trying experiments to see what they could accomplish. The Doctor further told Mr. Conant that, if he desired to stop the manifestations, all he need do would be to turn on the gas, and cause the room to be a little lighter. This Mr. C. at once accomplished, and the trouble ceased. The nicety of the law governing physical manifestations as based upon the absence of light as an element too positive to be successfully surmounted, is here exemplified.

Another singular circumstance occurred in the experience of Mrs. Conant during her stay at this house. She was suddenly awakened at midnight by some impulse which she could not fathom, and sat up in bed, gazing doubtfully around for some minutes. All at once, not far from her couch, she beheld two forms—a male and a female—who looked kindly but steadfastly upon her. The male was crowned with a turban-like cap, upon the front of which glittered two golden crosses. His eyes were large and black; his hair and beard of a dark hue—the latter being parted in the centre, and flowing over his breast, disclosing in the division a chain around his neck from which another gold cross was pendant. The lines around his mouth and upon his forehead indicated mental power and a firm will. The female (both figures being shown only in vignette) wore a small tasseled crest, ornamented with a large white

feather, upon her head ; her hair was of a jetty black, whose darkness was relieved by ornaments of gold ; her face was more of an oval in cast — her eyes large and dark. A double chain of gold, to which a cross was attached, ornamented her shoulders, which were bare.

The male spirit spoke to the medium, stating that while in earth life he occupied the post of Bishop in the Roman Catholic Church, and that the lady spirit present was his sister. They had made themselves apparent, he said, to E. Rodgers — a spirit artist then living in the West — he had painted their pictures, and when duplicates of them could be obtained he (the spirit) would impress him to send a copy of each to her, that she, knowing the artist to be an entire stranger to her, might be thoroughly convinced of the genuineness of their coming, and of the fact of their continued life. The duplicates, when they *did* arrive, were found in resemblance to be identical with the individuals seen by Mrs. Conant in her vision.

II.

“BIRDIE” WILSON.

Anna Cora Wilson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis B. Wilson of Boston, passed from earth life, October 27, 1858, at the early age of 12 years, 7 months, 17 days. She has often returned, cheering her parents by messages in prose and versification, through the lips of Mrs. Conant, both at the public séances at the *Banner of Light* rooms, and at the residence of the medium, where they are frequent visitors. Some of her metrical utterances have, in con-

nection with music, found extensive use as songs — the following “Homeward Bound” having been embodied in the “Spiritual Harp:”

“The buds are bursting in the vales,
And changing into flowers,
And the merry, merry birds of spring
Are gladdening all the hours.

So from my home of endless bloom,
Like a wild bird, gay and free,
I come to the hearts of those I love,
Whose watch-light burns for me.

Not o’er the chilling stream of death
Did I paddle my fairy bark,
But over the radiant river of life,
Whose waters are never dark;

Whose white-capped waves your lilies bear
From the cold, dark soil of earth,
To plant them on the other side,
And bless with a heavenly birth.

Then dream no more of a river dark,
And a boatman pale with years,
Who will come to guide you through the mist
And the end of mortal tears;

For only an angel full of love,
With roses and lilies crowned,
Will come to ferry you over the stream,
When the soul is homeward bound.

The following poem was given through Mrs. Conant by “Birdie” for recitation by Master Warren H. Doolittle, at the Jubilee exercises commemorative of the twentieth anniversary of the birth of Modern Spiritualism, held at Music Hall, Boston, March 31, 1868:

“A goodly greeting the angels give
On this glorious festal day!
For the shades of night
Are taking their flight
Before the Truth’s clear ray!

Then wave your banners and sing your songs!
A requiem chant for the dead:
For this morning light
Is the death of night,
And Error by Truth is led.

You will fear no more to cross the tide
In search of the heavenly goal,
For the great white throne
Of the All-Unknown
Is found in the human soul.

The fair book of life is opened wide
Its fountain is flowing free;
And the spirit land
Just over the strand,
Is waiting for you and me!"

At the close of a message referring to certain peculiar geographical experiences which she had after her transition from physical life, "Birdie" holds the following language concerning our earth:

"As I was meditating what the condition of the earth was millions of ages ago, and wondering how such a beautiful planet was ever called from chaos, these thoughts came to me:

"Folded safe in the arms of chaos and night
This beautiful planet in slumber lays,
Till the voice of our Father said, 'Let there be light!'
Then out of the darkness came the new day.

'All hail and thrice welcome!' sang that infinite band
Of star-worlds that people the heavenly strand.
'All hail to thy beauty, thy brightness and worth!
With sunbeams of glory we crown thee, fair earth.

Go forth on thy mission, thou child of the sun,
Nor ever forget that, though many, we're one;
That in infinite wisdom we all must abide,
As we sail through the air on eternity's tide.'

Folded safe in the arms of chaos and night,
The germ of the lily in darkness lays,
Till the voice of our Father says, 'Come to the light!'
Then rises the lily in garments of praise.

So all beautiful truths in the fathomless deeps
 Of the infinite ocean of soul abide,
 Till the breath of Omnipotence over them sweeps,
 And they float on the waves of Time's rushing tide.

Suns, systems, and atoms in order revolve
 Round an infinite centre of wisdom and love:
 And the dark night of chaos must yield up its dead
 When the beams of life's morning upon it are shed.

On a certain Christmas-day the daughter returned
 through Mrs. C., bringing the following as her gift
 of love:

"O mother, dearest mother!
 From my home beyond the tomb,
 With my Christmas gift of rosebuds,
 Twined with laurel leaves, I come!

Gemmed with dew is every petal,
 Sparkling in the Truth's clear light;
 Morning offerings from the soul-world,
 Culled by hands of angels bright;

They will never, never wither,
 But grow brighter ever hour,
 Till at last through perfect wisdom
 Every bud becomes a flower.

Take them, mother, and to father
 Bear a portion of my love;
 Tell him 'Birdie' lives and loves him
 In her spirit-home above."

As before mentioned, this spirit passed on in the month of October, 1858; at a public séance held on the 21st of October, 1869, she took occasion to manifest—her parents being present—as at an anniversary of her change, addressing them in the following delicate and touching manner, which may prove of comfort to other hearts than theirs:

"You are weary of life, dear mother,
 You are weary of mortal pain;

But the leaves of hope are fresh and green,
And your mantle of faith, still of silver sheen,
Tells the haven of death you will gain.

Mother, dear, never for one moment think that God has separated me from you, for when the body is separated from the body, it does not follow that the soul should be separated from the soul. Your home is my home ; and when you come to my life, our homes will be one. You will give up your home, and I shall have prepared one for you, but you will decorate it with your own good thoughts and your own good deeds. I thought I would come to-day, mother, because it is October — a month bringing sad memories to you, because it was then I went away. But it only comes once a year, and after that the pure snow of winter falls, and covers and protects the flowers, that when the spring comes they may come forth again in beauty. And so will it be with you and I, dear mother. When you have done with this life, the spring-time of the other life will have come. No Octobers there, no partings, no graves, no more sadness, no more tears."

JOSEPHINE CARLTON.

The following lines were given at a public free circle through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant, by the spirit of a member of that class of female unfortunates denominated prostitutes, upon whom society has seemingly united to press the brand of infamy, albeit they are mainly "more sinned against than sinning." The production is here published as an instance of spirit individuality rather than for any intrinsic merit it contains — it being stated by the controlling intelligence that the style of the composition would be recognized by the friends of the manifestor. Josephine met her death by fire in a city in the West. The controlling intelligence at the séance at which this poem was pronounced, said, among other things, previous to introducing the spirit :

"Learn by the earth history of this unfortunate one, that you

should not measure truth and virtue by the standard of human law—that none but the Infinite is able to measure them correctly, or to mete out justice to each and all of his children. Then cast no stone, for if you do, in the hereafter you will bitterly regret it. Therefore spare yourself the regret that many are plunged into. Censure no one. Rather lift your souls to the Great Infinite Power of Goodness, asking that all may be strong, and none weak enough to fail in the way of life.”

POEM.

“Away from the sunshine, and out in the cold,
’Mid the wild waves of sin and sorrow untold,
I slept the last sleep which to mortals is given,
And dreamed of my mother, an angel in heaven.

Full twenty-five years of earth-life had fled,
Since I stood, a fair child, at that mother’s death bed,
And heard her last sigh, her last blessing given,
As she whispered, ‘My darling, I’ll meet you in heaven.’

Those twenty-five years with life’s dregs had been filled,
And all the bright hopes of my soul had been stilled;
For the tempter, with syren voice, had beguiled
My feet from the path where true happiness smiled.

‘O, Father of Mercies!’ I cried, in my woe,
‘Give me one ray of sunlight—just one—ere I go;
Let my weary head rest on the bosom of Him
Who pitied the fallen, and understood sin.’

Hark! what is that music that floats on the air?
’Tis the voice of my mother, so sweet and so clear;
And she bids me look upward, nor fear to depart
From the world where sin’s arrows sink deep in the heart.

O! can it be true that she folds me once more
To the bosom of love on Eternity’s shore?
Yes, yes, ’tis all true—I am safe from the storm
Of temptation and sin, and the cold world’s frown.”

III.

The following story is presented as an instance of the wide range of literary matter given from time to time through the organism of the medium. The sketch (as stated in a preceding Part) was mechanically written for the columns of the *Banner of Light*, (appearing in No. 5, Vol. V.—April 9th, 1859,) through the hand of Mrs. Conant, by unseen authors.

THE STOLEN CHILD:

OR,

THE HERMIT OF THE POWOW.

A TRUE STORY.

In a low-roofed cottage upon the banks of the Powow, dwelt an old man, and a girl about fourteen years of age. Some twelve years previous to the time of the opening of our story, the good villagers of Amesbury were suddenly surprised by the appearance of a stranger in their midst. He came among them like a shadow, bearing in his arms a sickly and puny-looking babe of two years. His foreign air and uncouth appearance rendered him a fitting object for village gossip.

“I wonder where he came from?” said one; and “I wonder what he intends to do with that child?” said another; “Who do you suppose he will get to keep his house?” asked a third; but as there was no one to answer these questions, the tongue of gossip became quiet, and the stranger pursued the even

tenor of his way, like one unknown. He rarely held converse with any of the villagers, seeming to prefer a life of solitude. He was often seen walking out with the child early in the morning; and, in the evening, smoking a long-stemmed pipe in front of his cottage door. At the village store, he always bought the best, never stopping to inquire the price of the articles there obtained. One old lady, actuated by curiosity, ventured to call upon him; but being rudely repulsed, no one else dared to follow her example. The little girl was often seen playing near the cottage; but if, in passing, any one chanced to speak to her, the stranger was always sure to call her in, thus keeping all doors of knowledge securely barred concerning their mode of life and former history.

Toward the close of a sultry day in July, in the year 18—, the old man and his youthful charge—now a beautiful girl of fourteen summers—was seen to ride away from the cottage in a close traveling carriage. The children of the village determined to gratify the spirit of inquisitiveness which possessed them, by looking into the windows of the dwelling just vacated by the old man and his lovely protégé, after having first satisfied themselves that the mysterious pair had passed beyond the limits of the town. But to their utter dismay, they found that the inside shutters of the cottage were closed, and firmly bolted; so, after taking a survey of the premises, they departed not a whit the wiser than when they came.

Nine days passed, and yet “the Hermit,” as the villagers appropriately named him, had not returned to Amesbury. On the evening of the tenth day, however, lights were discerned in the cottage. With-

in a small, but handsomely furnished apartment, the young girl, before mentioned, was seated, apparently busily engaged in reading. At one extremity of the room sat the old man smoking his pipe, and evidently absorbed with his own reflections.

Suddenly rising from his seat, the hermit moved towards the table before which the young girl was seated, and requested her to lay aside her book and listen to him.

"Well, father, what is wanted now?" asked the fair creature addressed, as she pettishly cast aside her book and turned towards him with a slight frown distorting her handsome face.

"What is wanted now?" echoed the old man; "I wish to communicate to you what you have so long sought to learn, namely, the history of your birth."

"Oh, then I shall be no dull listener," replied the young girl, as half ashamed of the peevishness which she had so lately manifested, she rose from her chair and imprinted a fond kiss upon the broad and expansive brow of him whom she had known and loved from earliest infancy as a father.

The tenderness of innocent and confiding childhood was irresistible even to the hermit's heart, and so, drawing his beautiful charge toward him, he affectionately caressed her, and looking earnestly into the depths of her violet-colored eyes, bade her, in tones of unmistakable kindness, to take a seat upon his knee.

This slight wish gratified, the old man began the recital of a story which had long remained secretly locked within his breast, by saying:

"Twelve years ago this very night, I brought you

in my arms to this cottage. You were then one year and eleven months old, and as fine and promising a babe as one might ever have wished to see. Since that time no hand but mine has ministered to your growing wants. I cradled you in my arms during your infancy; sung you to sleep at nightfall, and sought to train aright your young mind, as it daily expanded with the growth of your body. The seeds of knowledge, which I sowed in you, fell not upon unthankful soil, for you are not only well versed in English literature, but have some familiarity with the arts and sciences of olden time. It is true you are deficient in many of the lighter and ornamental branches of education, usually classed under the head of female accomplishments; but there is already time enough yet for the acquisition of these, should you desire it in after years. You have often asked me why I kept you so closely confined within these cottage walls, and if I always intended to do so? I am now ready to answer these oft-repeated questions. First, my motive in keeping you prisoner these twelve long years was, that I might fulfill a fiendish and most inhuman vow, made by me several years since, and prompted by a bitter feeling of revenge, on account of the terrible wrongs and cruelty I then experienced. Remorse has at last touched my heart, and the justice and freedom so long denied you, are now near at hand. In short, I have no further intention of keeping you captive here in this quiet and secluded town more than a week or two longer; then you will return to your native land, and kindred, where, amidst new and exciting scenes, you will learn

to forget the old man whom you have always been taught to call by the endeared name of father."

"What!" exclaimed the young girl, "are you not then my father?" and a look of mingled sorrow and surprise overspread her fair features as she quickly sprung to her feet, and stood silently awaiting the old man's reply.

"Hush, child!" said the hermit. "No, I am not your father; but have patience, and you shall soon know all!"

Again the delicate head, with its soft ripples of golden hair, was pillowed upon the stout and manly breast of the hermit, whom many feared and few or none loved, as with quivering lip and slightly tremulous voice, he continued:

"Near eighteen years ago I lived in London, and was there betrothed to a woman, alas! you never knew—your mother—and by name Alice Campbell. The day appointed for our marriage arrived. All things were in readiness, and even the guests were assembled in the princely drawing-room of Sir John Campbell's mansion, when my intended bride was taken suddenly ill, and the long anticipated marriage of Alice and myself was indefinitely postponed.

During the illness of your mother, which was pronounced to be that of brain fever, (and which lasted some four or five weeks,) the invalid, whose presence I was denied on the plea of Alice's deliriousness of mind, was constantly visited by one Lord George Hazeltine, a nephew of Sir John Campbell, who had but recently resigned a military commission which he had held most honorably during a five years residence in India. I had met with him but a few

times previous to the period appointed for my marriage with his cousin Alice, whom he had not seen since she was a small child. There was much of the true-hearted and chivalrous soldier about Lord Hazeltine, (now sole heir to several valuable estates in England,) that won my sincere friendship, destined alas! to be of short duration.

As Alice grew convalescent, I urged that our marriage should no longer be delayed, but as weeks lengthened into months, and the lady still plead physical weakness, and seemed in no way anxious for the consummation of an event upon which I had based my life's entire happiness in after years, I began to grow disheartened and impatient at this strange and unlooked-for turn in love affairs.

While breakfasting alone at one of the numerous public coffee-houses in London one fine morning, my attention was attracted by two gentlemen who occupied seats at the next table, by their distinctly audible conversation, which, assuming the tone of a dialogue ran as follows:

'Well, Captain, do you attend the grand wedding to-morrow?' said the younger of the two, addressing his companion, a man of proud bearing, and wearing Her Majesty's uniform.

'Whose wedding?' inquired the officer, as he paused from sipping the cup of fragrant Mocha before him.

'Why, the young and beautiful daughter of Sir John Campbell is to marry the ex-Colonel, Lord Hazeltine. I am surprised that you have not heard such a rare bit of gossip before this, for the affair, though a sudden one, is nevertheless the all absorb-

ing theme of conversation in fashionable circles. Lord Hazeltine, report says, is a cousin of the lady, whom she has not seen since a child, and whose military honors and immense wealth have given him the precedence over his less fortunate rival, Sir Charles Nottingham.'

I could hear no more, for the thought that I had been most cruelly deceived by one whose love was far dearer to me than even life itself, was madness; my first impulse was to choke the villain, who, stranger though he was, had dared to utter in my presence words of falsity and mocking pity, thereby adding insult to injury. But a few moments' reflection begat in my soul a more merciful and reasonable spirit, and the idea that perhaps my love and confidence in Alice had blinded my eyes to the cunning and well-laid schemes of treachery of her accomplice and lover, now rapidly forced itself upon my hitherto unsuspecting mind, with terrible weight.

Without even questioning those who had spoken so lightly of the contemplated marriage of one who was, perchance, about to sacrifice her heart's happiness at the shrine of wealth and worldly fame, I seized my hat and rushed into the crowded street, resolved upon ending all further suspense in the matter by calling upon Alice, and learning from her lips the bitter truth or villainous falsehood.

A few minutes of hard walking brought me to the residence of Sir John Campbell. Inquiring for Miss Alice of the servant who answered the bell, I was told that she was busily engaged with her mantua-maker, and could receive no visitors during the day.

Determined not to leave the house without behold-

ing my still loved Alice, I was on the point of bribing the servant to procure me an interview with his mistress, when Sir John Campbell suddenly made his appearance in the hall, and after directing the servant to conduct me to the reception room, departed immediately, for the purpose of informing his daughter that I was awaiting her presence below.

Full half an hour had elapsed—an age of indefinable torture and suspense to my impatient mind—when Alice Campbell, with a face as blanched and colorless as marble, made her appearance in the small but handsomely furnished reception room of her father's dwelling. One glance at that cold and strangely altered countenance was enough to confirm my worst suspicions. A brief conversation now ensued between both parties, in which Alice Campbell freely confessed the base piece of deception of which she had been the guilty originator, adding that her anticipated marriage with her cousin, Lord Hazeltine, was a matter of no small delight to her parents, who had from the first favored his suit.

I asked for no further explanation, confident as I was of no longer possessing the love of one whose heart I had always believed incapable of inconstancy and deceit. I did not heap curses upon the head of her whose cruelty had thus blasted each rising hope, and shut out the sunlight of love from my soul forevermore, but I bade Alice Campbell a respectful, aye, even tender adieu, as I hastily made my exit from her father's house.

At ten o'clock the following morning, the church of St. Paul was occupied with a large and expectant assemblage, all of whom were anxiously awaiting the

appearance of the distinguished ex-soldier and his intended bride. A perceptible flutter ran through the crowd, and instantaneously all eyes were turned toward the open door, upon whose threshold stood Alice and Lord Hazeltine. Another second and the bridal train had passed up the broad and richly carpeted aisle, forming a semi-circle about the altar. Like a freshly chiseled piece of statuary looked Alice Campbell, as she knelt upon the steps of the altar, with the heavy folds of her white satin robe falling in artistic grace to her daintily slippered feet. The marriage ceremony passed without interruption, and the newly wedded pair turned to leave the church. Determined that Alice should be made aware of my presence, I stationed myself upon the sidewalk just outside the church door. The crowd surrounding me, however, was so dense that I, the deceived and broken-hearted lover of her youth, would have been unnoticed by Alice, had it not been that the lady's veil accidentally caught in the coat button of a gentleman who stood next to me. Turning to disentangle it, the eyes of Alice Hazeltine fell unexpectedly upon my sorrowful countenance. A convulsive shudder passed over her slight frame, as with fast paling lips and closing eyes, the conscience stricken girl pronounced the once cherished name of 'Nottingham!' I saw the look of anxiety and tenderness which the bridegroom cast upon the lovely features of his swooning bride, as lifting her in his strong arms he bore her to the carriage, which stood in readiness to convey them to their future home; then drawing my hat closely over my eyes, to avoid the observation of strangers who had witnessed the scene that had just

transpired, I hastened away from the spot, with but one thought firing my burning brain—that of revenge!

Time passed on. Alice Campbell, now Lady Hazeltine, had made an extensive bridal tour through Southern Europe, and had returned once again to England, just in time to give birth to a daughter. Absence had strengthened rather than lessened the desire for revenge in my heart, toward one who had spurned my soul's deep love, for worldly dross and fame. When you were four months old, I learned by chance that a public christening was to take place at St. Paul's Church. The spirit of vengeance was paramount in my breast, and I soon succeeded in laying a plan for your abduction, which proved as successful as the most fiendish of wretches could have desired. The ceremony completed, the little Alice—nay, start not, my child, for such you were called after your mother, (the name of Mary Flanders being merely an assumed one, and given you by me, in order to ensure your more perfect concealment)—was sent home in a private carriage, accompanied only by its nurse, while Lord and Lady Hazeltine remained at church for the purpose of participating in the Sabbath morning exercises. The coach had not proceeded on its way more than a few squares, when I rode up on horseback to the side of the vehicle, requested the coachman (who by the way, recognized me at once as Sir Charles Nottingham,) to stop, and informed the unsuspecting nurse that the babe was wanted at church, and that I had been commissioned by Lord and Lady Hazeltine to bring you to them myself without a moment's delay. All objections upon the part of the old nurse

were, of course, at once overcome by the powerful arguments of the faithful coachman who had had fees paid by me too often in past years, to entertain the slightest suspicion of my honesty of purpose. With the babe safely in my clutches, I turned my horse's head in the direction of St. Paul's Church, and thus rode quickly on, until the carriage containing the nurse had passed entirely out of sight; then putting spurs to my horse, I dashed off into a narrow street which led to a remote quarter of the city, and having reached my intended place of destination, I placed you in the care of an old woman whom I had bribed with gold to utmost secrecy in the matter.

With her you remained until you were one year and eleven months old, when under cover of the night, I sailed in the 'Lapwing' for America, bearing you along with me. Meantime large rewards had been offered throughout the city of London for your recovery, but all to no avail. I had at last gained the revenge which I had for months prayed for, and I now gloated in secret over the desolation which I had wrought in the home of my rival.

On arriving in New York, I took passage on board a sloop bound for Newburyport, where I remained only a few days, and then brought you to Amesbury, where you have grown up from infancy almost to womanhood, secluded from the bustle and confusion of the world, and carefully guarded from the eye of public curiosity, by him whom the villagers have styled the 'Hermit of the Powow,' and whom you have heretofore known, only as your father, and by name, William Flanders."

It was past midnight when the old man concluded

the recital of a tale, which more than once during its progress had wrung tears from the eyes of the beautiful girl whom he lovingly held in his arms. With many thanks for the revelation made to her, after the lapse of so many years, during which the inquisitive child had been kept in entire ignorance of the history of her birth, Alice Hazeltine fervently kissed him good-night, whom she had indeed learned to love as a father, and hastened to her solitary bed-chamber to dream of the joys which the future held in store for her, when, restored once more to the arms of a mother whose love she had never known, she could explore the mysteries of the great and living world, from which she had been thus far shut out.

A month later, and the hermit and Alice Hazeltine bade farewell to their quiet home on the banks of the Powow, for New York, from which city they embarked for England in the "Witch of the Wave."

After a somewhat tempestuous passage, Sir Charles Nottingham and his beautiful charge arrived at their destined port, Liverpool. A few hours ride brought them to England's great metropolis—London. Here the hermit learned from the lips of strangers that Lord Hazeltine had died of consumption, some five years before, induced by a life of dissipation, and that his gentle wife was residing with her aged parents.

After procuring new wardrobes for both Alice and himself, and a disguise to be used when occasion required it, the hermit, now greatly improved in personal appearance, took lodgings for "Charles Nottingham and ward," as he registered their names upon the books at one of the most fashionable hotels

in London. After a week's sojourn in that city, the hermit, clothed in a disguise which at first baffled all efforts at recognition upon the part of even Alice, set out for the Campbell mansion, the residence of Alice Hazeltine. Arriving there, he requested a few moments' conversation with Lady Hazeltine, but was told by the servant that his mistress did not give audience to paupers. Vexed and insulted, he refused to leave the house until he had communicated his errand, which he declared to be of great importance to Lady Hazeltine. The foppish lackey, finding that he had found a customer who was not to be repulsed, at last departed to execute his commission, leaving our hero standing alone in the hall.

Arrayed in sable robes, her former beauty saddened but not destroyed, Lady Hazeltine descended the stairs, and in a tone of deep compassion requested the old man to follow her into an ante-room. His first words, upon finding themselves secure from the listening ears of others, were,

"Madam, I believe it was your misfortune to lose some years since a beautiful infant."

"You speak truly, sir," replied Lady Hazeltine, "but how is it that a stranger is so well informed of a circumstance which transpired fourteen years ago?"

"Pardon my presumption, lady, but promise me that you will sincerely answer me one question more, and I will tell you that regarding your stolen child that will make your motherly heart dance with joy."

Mystified and trembling, the lady could only bow her assent to the old man's last remark. "Tell me, Lady Hazeltine, did you ever *love him* to whom you were once betrothed — Sir Charles Nottingham?"

"*Love him?* God in heaven alone knows how much I loved him, and how deeply I wronged his noble heart! But who are you, sir?" said the lady, recovering her dignity and composure, "that thus dares to penetrate into the innermost secrets of my soul?"

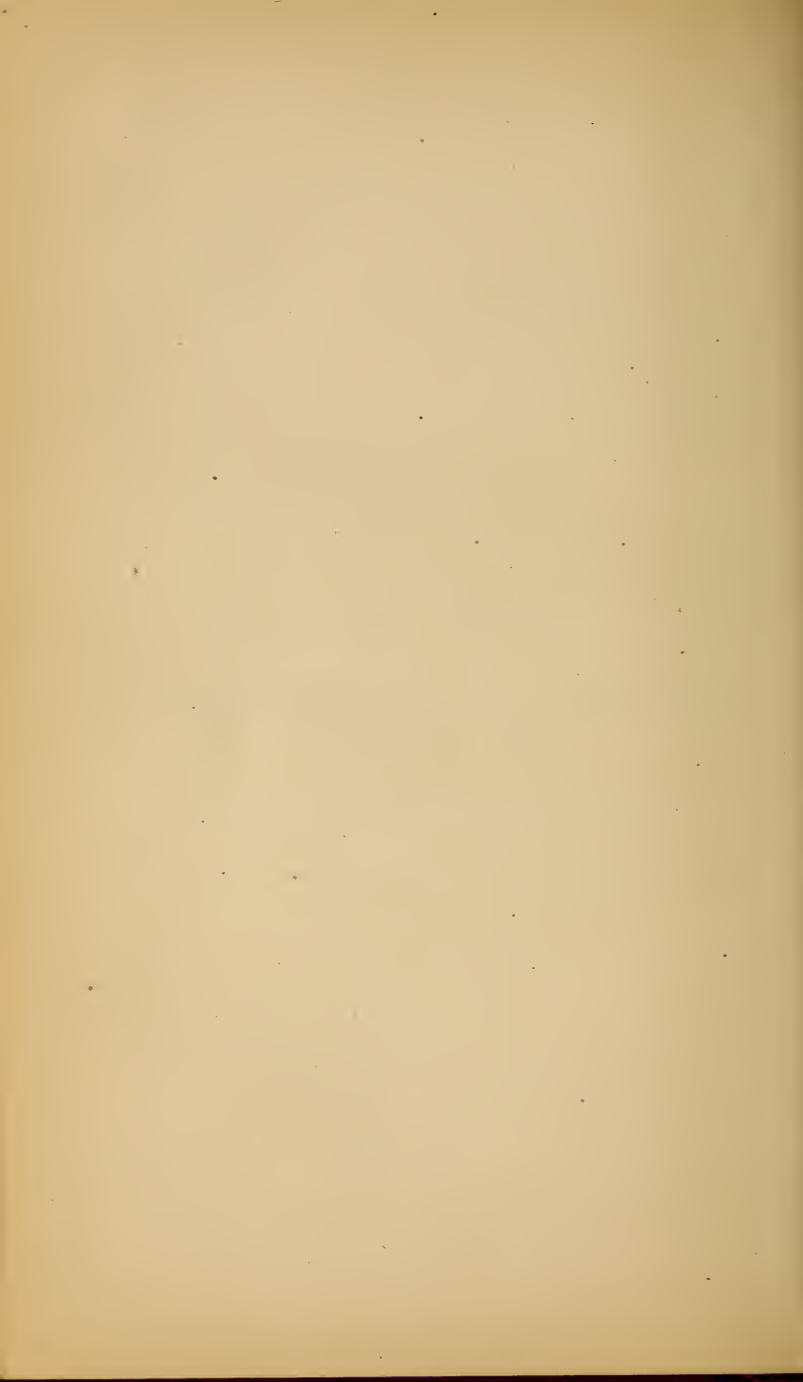
"Would you know, madam?" said the hermit, throwing off his tattered disguise; "then behold in *me*, one who once *loved* Alice Campbell — ay, more than that — who still *loves* her now, Sir Charles Nottingham, the frenzied lover, and cruel abductor of her child, who, thank God, still lives!"

The shock was too great for the sensitive nature of Alice Hazeltine to endure. A fainting fit ensued, which the careful efforts of Sir Charles Nottingham soon conquered. Upon the lady's restoration to her former spirits, suitable explanations were made by both parties, which ended in the reünion of mother and child, and the mutual forgiveness of two who had equally sinned.

A fortnight later, and the Campbell mansion was the scene of a private but happy wedding — that of Lady Hazeltine and Sir Charles Nottingham, known for many years in Amesbury as "The Hermit of the Powow!"

PART IX.

CHARACTERISTIC MESSAGES. — VERIFICATION OF
SPIRIT MESSAGES.



PART IX.

“Cheer up, sad hearts, ’t is not all dark
That broods upon our morning;
Above us sings the heavenly lark,
And sweetest light is dawning.
For all our grief, there’s sweet relief,
Though all the world may doubt us;
Oh, never fear, the day is near,
There’s love and light about us.”

“In soul, man mounts and flies —
In flesh he dies —
Not that he may not here,
Taste of the cheer;
But as birds drink and straight lift up their head,
So must he dip and think,
Of better drink
He may attain to, after he is dead!”—*Herbert.*

I.

Under the classification: “Characteristic Messages,” the reader is presented with a few examples from the great mass of individual spirit communications which have from time to time been given through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant. Those annexed are selected as being stamped to a more than usual degree with the seal of originality as to matter and diction, or the peculiar mental traits of persons from whom they profess to emanate. The following from the spirit of one of the former publishers of the *Banner of Light* (and contained in its

issue for Saturday, September 16, 1871,) is replete with the firm will, and tireless activity which marked his path of life on earth :

WILLIAM BERRY.

“At the urgent solicitations of many of my friends, I presume to occupy this place for a few moments, and in course of time to occupy a short space in your columns. They want to know why it is that I have not returned, manifesting through the *Banner of Light*. They expected it long ago, they said. They expected much of me. They are disappointed. They thought I would bring them news that would perhaps eclipse all that they had ever obtained. They thought I was so well posted on spiritual matters here, that I should be able to do much for them, in returning and manifesting through this and other media. The first great objection is, I am not much given to speech-making — would rather hear some one else than myself. The second is, I have no taste for the labor of vitalizing blockheads, who know nothing about Spiritualism, and care nothing about it. And as the Message Department of the *Banner* is devoted mainly to that class of individuals, I have deemed it proper, inasmuch as my instincts do not lead me that way, to remain behind the scenes. And, again, as I have been largely occupied in the spirit-world, being the publisher of a daily journal very much larger than the dear old *Banner*, of course I have something to do. Notwithstanding I have an able corps of assistants, the editorial department being under the jurisdiction of the able Henry J. Raymond, of New York — yet, notwithstanding all their assistance, I have enough to do, and have found it much more profitable to stay behind the scenes — to assist from behind the scenes in the process of vitalizing those mortal blockheads. That is just the term I mean to use, and none other will suit the case.

And, again, I am afraid, seeing all I am able to see of their prejudices, that if I were to stand too near I would be likely to use the mallet instead of moral suasion. Instead of going on month after month, and year after year, trying to prove the immortality of the soul, and the power of the soul to return after death, I should speedily open those blockheads and let the soul out where it would fly higher and see clearer. And as we spirits are largely possessed of power over matter, I might be tempted to make a bad use of it. So, you see, I have various reasons for not communicating through the *Banner of Light*, and for not using my influence for the furtherance of modern Spiritualism on earth. Good day. William Berry."

II.

A former physican of Mrs. Conant gives his experience concerning her case, and its after effects upon his mind, in the subjoined message, which was spoken through the organism of the medium at a séance held September 5, 1872:

DR. JOHN GARDINER.

"I went forth from this life in absolute darkness, since I did not believe in a life after death; but a good God, being no respecter of persons, was quite as good to me as to any one else, and I have learned, or rather unlearned, the mistakes I made on earth. I am now in the enjoyment of circumstances or conditions that prove to me that the soul is endowed with eternal life. There was nothing on earth that proved that to me. The church was a myth, and all the various religious faiths were like so much children's play to my mind. I was a physician by education and occupation. When I saw the breath passing out from the dying, I said: 'that is the last of them.' I believed it, and I promised some of my good church going friends that I would assure them in some way if it were possible to, of my change of

faith in the other life, provided I found another life, and changed my faith. They did not know of this happy way of return, neither did I. But I am compelled to say to them that with all their churchly power and influence and faith, they are quite as much in the dark as I was. They will find quite as much difficulty in ascertaining their true status in spirit life, as I did. I would advise them to change the base of their operations here on earth, and investigate by this new light that seems to be flooding the world, and that offers everybody, rich and poor, bond and free, a chance to bask in its beams. That is my advice to them.

I had a singular experience with this medium, whose physician I was for a time during my earth life, which produced so great an impression on my mind that I never forgot it, and I really believe it was the remembrance of that, which roused me to consciousness in the spirit life, and made me know where I was, and what change I had passed through. It may not be amiss for me to relate that experience:

One afternoon, in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-one, I was called to see this medium, who was sick at that time. Her powers in this direction were not known — neither by herself, I believe, nor by any of her friends. On coming to her bedside, I soon saw that she was in the last stage of Asiatic cholera. The fatal collapse had set in, and the physician knows too well where that must end. I saw not the slightest hope in her case; when, to my surprise she aroused and said to me, ‘Doctor, can you save me?’ I merely replied, ‘I am sorry I was not called before; I will do what I can.’

I immediately prepared the remedies which I usually gave in such cases, and added something a little unusual, deeming it would have a good effect in her case, if anything could. I administered the medicine once in twenty minutes. I watched for the effect, but there was none. True to its nature, the disease pre-

vented the action of any remedies upon the system. They had no effect whatever. The remedies which I had given, were the best, the very best known to me, and those which would never fail, if given before the setting in of this fatal collapse; but I was informed by her attendants that this condition had been upon her for over four hours, consequently I made up my mind she was fast sinking in death.

After having administered four, or perhaps five doses with no effect, she again roused, turned to me, and said, 'Doctor, double the dose and give it to me once in ten minutes, and also apply baked potatoes under my arms, on my wrists, and on my feet.' Bind them on, hot from the oven.' I said to myself, 'Nothing can do her any good; in my opinion, nothing can do her any harm; this order shall be obeyed.' I carried it out as quickly as possible. After sitting by her bed some two—between two and three—hours longer, I felt the pulse returning, and saw that the hue of death upon her face was departing. I began to hope, I scarce knew why. I knew that there never had been a case on record where a recovery had ensued after collapse had set in. But she slowly began to improve, and after about three hours the pulse became plainly apparent. It was evident that she was better. She then looked up to me and said, 'Doctor, I shall live; give me twenty drops of laudanum, with twenty drops of spirits of camphor, once in twenty minutes, until I sleep. I shall get well.'

I was particularly averse to all narcotics, and never gave them. I left them out of my practice entirely, and she knew it; so I hesitated. She again made the request, and it seemed to me to come in the form of a demand. I had not the remedy with me, because I never used it. I inquired if it was kept in the house. No, it was not. One of the attendants immediately said, 'I will go for it.' It was brought from the nearest druggist's, and I gave it according

to her directions. After I had given three doses, she slept. When she awoke she was beyond all danger, and I left her, wondering what was the power that had spoken to me, for I felt conscious it was something besides herself that had given me such orders—had worked so miraculously. I termed it a miracle.

When the friends and neighbors inquired of me concerning her sickness, I said, ‘I cannot tell you how it is that I have saved her; certainly it was a miracle.’ By the remembrance of that miracle, my own consciousness was quickened in the higher life. By the same power, I return here, speaking through these very lips that I was the instrument of saving in mortal life years ago.

We cannot tell how truly God speaks to us, even through the simplest methods. We should heed all the voices of nature, I think, and weigh them well, and when we meet with anything that clashes with our fixed opinions, instead of throwing it aside, we should analyze it—we should ask, whether or no God has not sent it to us as a revelation direct from himself. I am Dr. John Gardiner, of Portsmouth, N. H.”

III.

The message here transferred from the pages of the *Banner of Light* of June 18, 1857, is inserted, that the physiological and psychological lessons therein contained may be urged anew upon the general mind. Public opinion, bulwarked behind assumed medical data, has been accustomed to deny conscious, individualized intelligence to the fœtus in gestation, before the quickening period, and stoutly rejects the idea of immortal existence as applied to infants who come still-born into the confines of physical life, and are as quickly immured in the bosom of earth to

undergo the natural process of decay. The manifesting spirit, however, declares its existence in the spirit world. The fact that it indeed never saw the light of the earthly sun is strictly true, as after the publication of the message its every circumstance was verified by the testimony of the parents of the child—Mr. and Mrs. Mical Tubbs—then of Boston, Mass., but now residing in San Francisco, Cal. They were much pleased as well as astonished to read the words of one who passed out of the physical ere contact with the grosser forms of materiality had clouded and saddened the germ of its spiritual life. The child having no name given it on earth, could only in manifesting, repeat its angel name:

“LIGHT.”

“Twenty-six years ago, I passed to the spirit land. My eyes were never opened to behold the beauties of earth, for my material and spiritual birth were all one. Yet when the breath of the living God first thrilled and filled my infant form, ere it was matured in shape, or molded in the image of Deity, I became a living soul; a flower that the Great Architect had breathed into a spiritual existence. Therefore I was fit to become an inhabitant of the spirit world, and as an inhabitant, destined to progress, for progress is marked with the finger of Deity upon all He hath made. The parents to whom my mortal body belonged are still dwellers in the earth life, and to them I often return, making them fully realize that the body they beheld only in death, once encased an immortal spirit, and that that spirit has been taught of its earthly kindred by the angels who are constantly going to and from earth, making the connection between earth and the eternal world complete. For as the mortal and immortal bodies are for a time

united, even so are the natural and spiritual world combined in one, forming the great whole. Again—as the material or natural body is dead without the spiritual or immortal body, even so would the natural world pass into decay, unless it were immediately connected with the spiritual, the immortal world, which bears no decay, recognizes no death.

By and through this connection the angels do return and commune with the plants from whence they sprung, or had their natural existence in. As the sunlight of earth kisses the flowers into new life, even so shall the coming angels kiss into new life the dead ones of earth. And as death is traced upon all save God, all evils eventually die, and God and his creations live eternally. All creations of the Almighty are fashioned in the image of intelligence which is the image of God, from whence all intellect or wisdom emanates, and to which all wisdom in the lower must ascend; for God calleth to his own in earthly temples, and the answering spirit leaves all that is mortal at the call of the immortal, and comes up hither, to realize its maker in a diviner sense.

When disease is raging in mortal forms, then the elements are at war, and unless peace can be restored the spirit takes its flight, the mortal dies and the elements are at rest.

Again, when evil takes upon itself the form of disease, then evil is sure to conquer, unless wisdom and nature stand upon the immortal side.

Man, in his natural state, was not subject to disease, because wisdom then stood at nature's right hand; but alas! folly now stands there in place of wisdom, and wisdom has wandered afar off. Thus thousands are continually passing from you to us, by reason of folly. Call aloud, oh ye foolish ones, that wisdom may again return, and fill your darkened temples with light."

IV.

Citations are here made from messages delivered by two chiefs of renown among the Indian tribes of the North American continent, that an idea may be conveyed of the earnest, dignified, and at the same time truly eloquent character of the red man's utterances through Mrs. Conant :

LOGAN.

"Hail, Sachems ! the Indian comes to add to your council fire, and give strength to your medium. Moons come and go, and yet the pale-face heedeth not the cry of the Indian. Bravery and skill the Indian finds written on the brow, but within he finds fear. Pale-faces, you need not have fear. The Great Spirit commandeth and you follow.

Pale-faces, you have mighty souls to follow, great fires to kindle ; the wigwam is large, needing much warmth and light, and you call for warmth and light, and you get them from the Great Spirit.

Pale sachem, mighty ones come to your council, and you make no obeisance ; you heed them not because you see them not. Time will come when you will see and will not fear ; now if you saw you would fear. Call for mighty intellects, for big lights, and you will get them.

The Indian sees you standing in mist, and he looks down the future, and he sees you standing in sunlight. Paddle you own canoes ; ask no aid save of the Great Spirit. Pale-faces, the sun goes down, and the Indian goes home."

WAUNONDAGA.

"Pale-faces, the Great Spirit smiles upon His children, and as He fashions them after himself, He would have them walk in His path. Many moons have come and gone since the Indian moved as you

now move — since he held control of a living, mortal form. And as he then paddled the canoe over the waters the Great Spirit gave him, he read therein that a mightier people than his would in time tread his shores and sail over his waters. The Great Spirit taught him in the leaf, the sun, the moon, the waters, that in after time the inhabitants of earth should understand Him better — should comprehend His mighty works. * * * Waunondaga saw the Great Spirit in all things, and he knew that He loved the Indian; but soon Waunondaga stood beside the mound where lay his parents; he betrayed no fear, but took up his spear and wandered to other lands, for he heard the big intellects were come — that pale faces had sailed over the big waters to people his land with mightier braves. And at this time the Great Spirit sends the Indian to give strength to your medium, that in after times other spirits may come and find easy access — may build a fire here, and send the smoke up to the Great Spirit.

Pale-faces, the words which come from your councils shall in time penetrate all souls; then shall error flee away, and the light of the great hunting-ground shall shine on earth, and there shall be no war. Years ago their arms were arms of hate, and when they struck there was death found, and in the faces of the multitude you might read folly where now you read wisdom, for the Great Spirit is bringing his children nearer Himself. The tomahawks of by-gone days lie buried beneath the earth, and the canoes are no more. Mighty intellects have reared mighty wigwams, and have covered the waters with their fire canoes. Farewell, pale-faces. Waunondaga's mission is done, and he goes hence."

V.

Many individuals, in view of the large number of messages which are yearly given through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant—the wide diversity of the spirits controlling, and the (in many instances) distant places of abode whither they desire their words conveyed—have been led in the past to address letters to the publishers of the *Banner of Light*, seeking information as to how many of such messages are recognized by friends yet in the flesh. Perhaps the same query may arise in the mind of the reader of this work. In reply, it is only necessary to refer to the numerous written acknowledgments of their truth—from parties in the majority of instances entire strangers to the medium or the publishers—which may be found scattered through the pages of the *Banner* from its first to the present volume. It is, of course, impossible in the limits of this book to give a tithe of these endorsements of the “letters of the dead,” but, as in case of the messages just quoted, a certain number of the most important verifications will be inserted as means toward the giving of some conception of the reliability and conclusiveness of the messages in general.

In reading the communications from week to week issued in the Banner Message Department, the inquirer into the accuracy of the phenomenon must bear in mind the obstacles surrounding the exhibition of intelligence through a body foreign to the spirit, and often of a sex different from its earthly form while in the physical. The difficulty is clearly

set forth by W. E. Channing, in an early number of Vol. II.:

“Spirits of all classes return to earth to commune with mortals, and they sometimes find it exceedingly hard to control your mediums successfully, for there is ever an antagonistic power going out in the spirit world and the earth sphere, and the controlling spirit is first obliged to overcome that power ere he can manifest at all. And again, we are obliged to govern the material, physical, animal nature of mediums, that it shall be ours, not theirs, for the time being. Mortals are poorly aware of the vast amount of power that is exercised over the medium in giving these simple, and often ungrammatical manifestations.”

The great advantage offered by the organism of Mrs. Conant as a channel of communication for spirits of all grades of intelligence, consists in her complete passivity to influences from without; in other words, the mental friction consequent on influencing the mediumistic machine is less in her case than in that of many others. With reference to her life work and this peculiarity of her mediumship, Hudson Tuttle, well known to the Spiritualist public as a deep thinker and able writer, thus bears testimony:

“The Message Department of the *Banner of Light* has been sustained from the first issue of that journal through the mediumship of Mrs. J. H. Conant. We are aware that the literary merits and utility of those messages have been severely criticised, but we believe always by those who have not comprehended their purpose. They are not to be judged by ordinary

rules. They are the spontaneous expression of spirits who usually there find their first opportunity of communicating with earth. If their diction was perfect, how soon would the critics carp at the incongruity! Each speaks in his own language and relates his own story. That a medium can relate these experiences, filling one folio page of a journal like the *Banner*, week after week and year after year, and never repeat, we consider, of itself, an insurmountable obstacle to any theory short of its spiritual origin. They are unique. The history of the world presents nothing like them, and were they bound in one huge volume with their verifications, would form the most overwhelming evidence to be drawn from the realm of mental phenomena.

Those who attend her circles have the evidence of their senses. She is a delicate, retiring lady, who shrinks from contact with the world. When she is controlled by the spirits, her manner and voice correspond to their character. She speaks in the soft modulations of childhood, and the harsh tones of rudest men; in the feeble accents of age, and the coarse notes of sternest health. During the delivery of each message she is for the time the representative of the spirit who is communicating, and her features correspond to the character controlling her.

She is probably one of the finest illustrations of sensitiveness in the long list of mediums, and a notable instance of the perfect control spirits may acquire over the physical organism when allowed freely to perfect their purposes."

VI.

As the first in the series of chosen verifications of the spirit messages given through Mrs. Conant, proof is presented concerning the communication purporting to come from "Harriet Sheldon, of Gaston, Alabama,"

which was published in the *Banner of Light* for May 7th, 1857: .

HARRIET SHELDON.

This spirit came with such a joyous smile upon her lips, that those present could not help remarking that she was particularly happy, or seemed to be so.

“ Oh, yes, I am always happy. Some years since I lived on earth, but not in this cold northern clime. You have many beautiful things, no doubt, but I should be happier to live where I used to live. You northern folks have strange looking houses, but I presume you are happy. I have a husband in the earth life, and I am anxious to commune with him, but he lives a long way off. Now will you send to him? My dear companion has married again, [1] it was my wish. I told him to take the lady, and have been continually trying to speak with her, and shall, in time. They have no good mediums where they dwell. I wish to ask my dear husband to sit alone a small portion of each day, and I will be with him and try to manifest. I want him to sit perhaps thirty or forty days. Tell him to often speak of me to those he has around him, beneath him [2]; he will understand this. Tell him to often sit under that little rose tree [3] — I shall be with him then, if he thinks of me — he will understand that also.

My name is Harriet Sheldon. The name of him who was my companion is Israel Sheldon — he resides in Gaston, Alabama. Will you attend to me early? Then good day, sir.”

William Berry — who, then in the physical, was acting in the capacity of scribe at the circle — on his return from the séance, to the office, suggested that Luther Colby, his partner, should write to Alabama, making inquiries respecting the facts in the case.

This was in the forenoon. In the afternoon of the same day a gentleman called at the Banner office, and said he wished two copies of the paper sent to a friend in Alabama.

"Are you acquainted in that State?" asked Mr. Berry.

He replied that he was to some extent, and surprised him (Mr. B.) by saying that while at dinner at his house two miles from the office, a spirit spoke through one of his family, who is a medium, and told him to go to the office of the *Banner of Light*, get two copies of that week's issue, and send them to Mr. Sheldon, of Gaston, Ala.

Ten years after the publication of this message, to the surprise and gratification of Mr. Colby, he received new evidence of its truthfulness from a purely material standpoint. A stranger called upon him at the office, and inquired if a file of the *Banner* was kept, and on being informed in the affirmative, he suggested that should Mr. C. turn to No. 5, Vol. I., a spirit message from Harriet Sheldon, to I. Sheldon, Gaston, Ala., would be discovered.

The bound volume containing the paper as dated was taken down, and the communication named found on the seventh page of the issue. The stranger requested that it be read to him, but previously asked:

"Does any one present know me? Did you ever see me before?"

Being answered in the negative, he continued:

"My name is Sheldon, and that message came from my wife. You don't any of you know me; but here is the evidence that I am the man I purport

to be," — at the same time drawing from his coat pocket a bunch of letters, two of which on being examined exhibited the same name as given in the message. Mr. Colby then commenced reading the communication, as requested. When he came to that portion where Mrs. Sheldon spoke of her husband's second marriage [1] the visitor said the statement as printed was true, for he asked her on her death-bed if she should have any objections to his marrying again, provided he found a suitable companion; and she answered in the negative.

At the time the communication was given through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant, Mr. Sheldon said he was a slaveholder, which accounted for the spirit's remark: "Tell him to often speak of me to those he has around him, beneath him," [2] — meaning his slaves.

The perusal was continued, until the words were reached: "Tell him to often sit under that little rose tree," etc., [3] when Mr. Sheldon said:

"I had contiguous to my residence a peculiar rose tree. I do not think there was another of the kind in our vicinity. On pleasant summer evenings, myself and wife were in the habit of sitting together beneath that tree, for it was tall enough for the purpose. You could have had no knowledge of this fact, neither of the private conversation I had with my wife, just previous to her death. I was no Spiritualist; I had no belief in spirit communion; yet here were facts I could not gainsay. I was compelled to believe that the spirit of my dead wife had indeed communicated; and I have no doubt of it now. I have been a subscriber to your paper ever since."

This voluntary testimony to the correctness of the message, coming direct, and unsought for from the lips of the husband of the manifesting intelligence, must be truly considered as a remarkable verification of spirit communion.

ELIZA MUCHMORE.

May 6th, 1857, a spirit incarnated herself in the mortal form of Mrs. Conant, and informed those present at the circle that her name was Eliza Muchmore; and that she was anxious to commune with her former pastor, Elder J—— B. D——. Not having any acquaintance with, or knowledge of the parties whose names were given, the publishers of the *Banner* were for a time at a loss as to what method to pursue to corroborate the message given by the stranger intelligence. But having faith in the reality of spirit communion, it finally occurred to Mr. Colby to write to Elder D——, whose name was given by the manifestor, that if such a person really existed he might respond. Accordingly he wrote, addressing the letter to Manchester, N. H., — the spirit stating that the Elder would probably be reached by inquiry there. As this language implied an uncertainty, Mr. C. took the precaution to write upon the envelope, a request to the postmaster to forward the letter to the party to whom it was directed, in case he was not in Manchester. Had he not taken this course the letter in all probability would never have been received by the person to whom it was addressed, and consequently the important evidence sought by Mr. Colby would not have been obtained. It was forwarded as per desire to Lowell, where the gentleman

resided, and in the course of a few days the following answer was received :

“LOWELL, May 13, 1857.

To the Editors of the Banner of Light :

Gentlemen :—I received a note from you respecting a person by the name of ‘Eliza Muchmore.’ I knew her well, at the time of my residence in Portsmouth, N. H. She was a member of my church. She was often at my house, and frequently wished advice. My impression is, she is dead, and I think I attended her funeral and preached a sermon. I have looked over a small book, and find a note in relation to a funeral, in January, 1854, or about that time, which I am quite sure was hers. I was not living at Portsmouth at the time ; but at her dying request, I think I was sent for and went. My writings, dates and facts are not sufficiently accurate to make positive oath to, as I keep no definite account of funerals, I attend so many ; for a number of years not less than one or two, and sometimes three per week. These are all the statements I can make without much more consideration on the subject. If it is necessary to the welfare of any living being, I will make further investigation concerning the dead.

Yours very respectfully,

J. B. D——.”

In his letter of inquiry to Mr. D——, Mr. Colby was careful to omit that it had anything to do with modern spiritual manifestations, and made no mention that the party concerning whom the information was sought, had returned to communicate, etc. He simply asked several categorical questions—deriving the points from the message which had been received—which were enough to excite the Elder’s benevolence, as his letter indicated.

The facts contained in the letter of corroboration were sufficient evidence to the publishers of the *Banner* of the reliability of the spirit message under consideration, and hence it was printed, as follows, together with Mr. D——'s letter in the issue of that paper, dated June 18, 1857:

“ ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.’ This was the text spoken from when my body lay beneath the pulpit, cold and still. Thirteen years ago my spirit left its mortal tenement and soared to reach its mortal kindred in the spirit world. He who spake to the people in regard to my dissolution, is now preaching the gospel to the people of earth. He also spoke by inspiration, yes, he was inspired to teach. Now if he will, his medium powers may be exalted, even to the highest heaven; for he is a medium of great power. Oh, how my spirit yearns to commune with him; but he fails to understand the great truths that flow from his lips. Oh, how my spirit yearns, I say, to commune with him,—and not only with him, but many in the earth sphere. He sits not down to pen that he would give to the multitude. The spirit says to him, always go forth, stand before the people, open your mouth and we will fill it, and thus he speaketh to the people, and in vain he tries to solve the problem, as he asks, why am I so filled with wisdom when I yield to the higher influences? and this simple child of earth who passed away years ago, comes back to tell him why.

He speaks not of himself, but is a simple trumpet for the higher powers, and yet he knows it not. And the people wonder at the eloquence, and when they consider that it comes forth spontaneous from the soul, they wonder still more. But they see not the angel band that thrill and fill his soul with wisdom! They fail to understand the hidden mystery that enveils him like clouds that shed a halo around

the sun. Oh, mortal, understand and worship thy God!

My name when on earth was Eliza Muchmore; he is called by the people Elder J—— B. —— D——. You may learn of him by inquiry at Manchester, N. H.”

During the very week in which were printed the message and accompanying letter, as undeniable proofs of spirit intercourse, Mr. D—— called at the office of the *Banner of Light*, acknowledged the receipt of Mr. Colby's note in person, and told him that if he were seeking evidence concerning a will or property in connection with his queries regarding Eliza Muchmore, he would be happy to give any further information which might be in his power. Mr. C. replied that he (Mr. D——) was altogether mistaken in his surmises. On the contrary, he desired the information he had given him—and for which he cordially thanked him—for the sole purpose of testing the truth of Spiritualism, or in other words, to ascertain whether the messages given through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant were *bona fide* spiritual manifestations or unreliable and fallacious; and that the result had proven to him—so far, at least, as this special message was concerned—the fact of spirit-return beyond the possibility of doubt.

The reverend gentleman hesitated some moments, as though a terrible conflict was going on in his mind, and replied by saying:

“Oh, is that all? I get all the revelations I want in the New Testament!”

VII.

STEPHEN HANSCOM.

"Being anxious to commune with my friends, I approach you in order that I may convey a message to them. She who was my sister in the earth life, communed with you a short time since, and I have now learned the philosophy of controlling a medium. I left a wife, and a large family of children. Oh! how my heart yearns toward them! How I wish I could give something to benefit them! I have one little boy on earth, who is sick, and a source of great anxiety to his mother. Physicians do not understand his case. The child does not need medicine, and should not take it. They who know better than I, tell me there is an obstruction in the liver, which can only be removed by the healing power through the hands of some medium, or through the power of some electrical machine.

I have a father on earth, blind to this new truth, and I wish to give him light. I wish him to read the Bible by his own reason, not by what the ministers tell him, and see if he cannot prove Spiritualism true, without going anywhere else. I have a mother in the spheres—none on earth; my father has a companion, but I speak of my mother.

I wish to tell my dear companion how often I am with her, and how much I try to do for her. I wish all the people who knew me on earth to know me now, as I am, and know that I am not dead. My name was Stephen Hanscom, and I lived in Elliot, Maine. My father bears the same name. I have a large circle of acquaintances in that vicinity."

As a test case for the benefit of the skeptic doubting the genuineness of the spirit communications contained in the Banner Message Department, the subjoined letter was addressed to the father mentioned

by the manifestor; the questions contained in it being based solely upon the statements of the intelligence — (all parties being strangers to the publishers of the paper) — and in no way indicating the spiritual origin of the information which prompted them:

“BOSTON, May 9, 1857.

Dear Sir: — Did you have a son named Stephen? If so, is he dead? Did he leave a wife and a large family of children? Are either of said children sick? We ask these several questions for good reasons, and you will much oblige us by transmitting an early answer.

Yours, respectfully,

L. COLBY & Co.

To Stephen Hanscom, Elliot, Me.”

In due time a reply was received from the gentleman named, to the following purport:

“ELLIOT, ME., May 19, 1857.

Dear Sir: — I received your letter May 16, and will endeavor to answer your questions. I had a son named Stephen, and he is dead. He has been dead five years; he left a wife and seven small children, the oldest fourteen years of age. The one next to the youngest was sick when he [Stephen] died, and has been sick ever since, and cannot talk.

I wish you to answer this.

STEPHEN HANSCOM.”

HIRAM BLANCHARD, EAST STOUGHTON.

In No. 3, Vol. I., the subjoined message appears from the above named spirit:

“There is a time for all things. It is now twenty years since I left earth, and yet although I have been so long away from the body and the earth, I enjoy true

happiness in communing with mortals. My dear friend, I suppose you are well aware that there are many spirits who seek to deceive, and again I suppose you are well aware that many true and truthful spirits are often charged with falsehood.

It is the duty of all faithful and true spirits who have the power of returning and communing — I say it is their duty to purify, if possible, those to whom they come. And the spirit, in the performance of his or her duty should not cease to return to do good, but should rather persevere and assist the bud of truth to bloom.

You, my friend, cannot understand why I speak thus to you; but there are those who will understand it. It is our duty to lead our earth friends away from temptation; and when we cannot nobly perform that duty, we had better not return. It has ever been my pleasure, as well as my duty, to benefit those to whom I have communed. I have seen them standing seemingly beside a gulf of ruin; I have sought to lead them away from this gulf, and in so doing I have received not welcome hands and an open soul, but a discharge from affection's bowers; but I fear not, I care not, so I am found in the way of duty. A word to those who are saying to themselves, we must be forgotten by our spirit friends, for we do not hear from them.

We are with them quite as much as ever; but they must be willing to hear their faults and turn away from them, as well as to hear their virtues. * * *

I have a companion on earth. To her I would say, gather up the flowers of peace that we continually scatter in your pathway, and constantly look upward, for your home is there.

I have brothers and sister. To them I would say be of good cheer, and when the last sands have run through the hour glass of mortal time, loving ones await your coming; resist all evil, and cling to all

good; love ye one another for in so doing ye fulfill the great law of your master, JESUS.

My name on earth was Hiram Blanchard. For references apply to Bradford Blanchard, New York City."

In order to satisfy themselves of the verity of this letter from the other side of life, the publishers wrote as directed, and on April 5, received the following letter, embracing their own note of March 29 to Bradford Blanchard. Though it may seem to some a causeless repetition, yet to present the matter in a stronger light to the mind of the skeptical, attention is again called to the fact that the spirit communicated at the Banner circle and through its medium unexpectedly, and that the parties to whom he referred in New York or elsewhere, were entirely unknown either to Mrs. Conant, Luther Colby & Co., or any of the employés or attaches of the firm. Even at that early day in the history of the Message Department, the publishers are found holding the following language:

"Spirits, who while on earth were entire strangers to us, daily communicate through our medium, that they may thereby reach their dear relatives and friends through the columns of this paper. We have hundreds of similar tests on file, which we intend to print as rapidly as our space will permit:

'EAST STOUGHTON, MASS. April 4, 1857.

L. COLBY & CO. — *Gents*: I have received from a brother, postmarked New York, April 2, the following note, with a request that I should answer the same:

"BOSTON, March 29, 1857.

BRADFORD BLANCHARD, ESQ. — *Dear Sir*: We

have a communication from Hiram Blanchard, (a spirit) who says he died twenty years ago, and has aged parents yet living. He also says he has left a wife. If you can give us any information upon the subject, we shall feel obliged. If true, it will be a great test. An early answer is solicited.

Yours respectfully,
L. COLBY & Co., 17 Washington St."

You say you have a communication from Hiram Blanchard, (a spirit.) We are anxious to know what that communication may be. It is true that we had a brother by that name who passed to the spirit world in 1837.

It is also true he has aged parents now living in this place; and also true that he left a wife, now Mrs. Belcher, of Randolph, Mass.

But I am at a loss to discover how, and in what manner you obtained these facts. Were you present when the spirit communicated? Did the spirit inform you who to write to in order to ascertain the truthfulness of it? Please inform us, and oblige one who is in pursuit of truth. N. BLANCHARD.'"

VIII.

"IS THERE ANY GOOD IN SPIRITUALISM?"

The above is the heading of an article which appeared editorially in the columns of the *Banner of Light* for July 23, 1857, (from the pen of William Berry,) and which is here republished, that the lessons contained therein may be again placed on record in answer to the snarling query *cui bono?* so often applied to communion with the invisibles. It would seem that the practical verification of this spirit's message presents an insuperable argument to the mind of the investigator, in favor of the surety

of spirit presence, and the power of the arisen ones to aid those who are yet children of earth :

“ On Tuesday, July 7; while we were at our usual sitting with Mrs. Conant, we received the following communication :

‘ After a lapse of years must I return to benefit mankind? Must I come back to deal out charity to my kindred? Are all Priests and Levites passing on the other side? Is there no Samaritan among you? Near one hundred and fifty years have rolled back into the past since I left earth. Justice demands that I return to benefit those my earthly eyes never beheld ; a long line of kindred have been clustering around a little few here in the earth life, that they may benefit them, and I alone, of all the kindred am able to speak. Near twenty days ago I was called to earth to visit my kindred, and I found those called mortals dwelling in poverty ; without the comforts by which mortals are wont to make themselves happy. Seeing their condition, understanding their souls, I draw nigh to you that I may make manifest their situation.

I am told by kindred spirits that mortals are continually asking, why do not spirits view our necessities, and aid us withal? We now ask mortals why the heavens above are not rent in twain at their bidding? Why does not the Almighty cast aside his laws, and become in subjection to mortals? All spirits who are laboring for the good of mankind, the redemption of the world, are seeking, by every opportunity, to benefit them in their pecuniary and spiritual means, and no door will be untried. And no matter how hard the hearts of men may be ; they are not so hard but the oil of love will soften them, and we may enter therein, making the waste to blossom, and the darkness to shine.

When poverty, like a sable clad messenger of despair, enters the earthly home, behold ! joy is driven

afar off, and mortals are led to cry out, where is our God, that he doth not interfere to relieve us? Cease your murmurings, oh ye inhabitants of earth, and know that the Lord your God is able to deliver, and, no matter how gross the surroundings, spirit power will in time penetrate it, and fill your souls with purity and love.

My name was Melchisedec Adams, and if you will permit me to carry your medium in spirit a short distance, I will give you the locality of those I have come to benefit.'

After a lapse of a few seconds, the medium, in a clairvoyant state, gave the following description of the locality to which the spirit desired to carry her:

'I am now in somebody's house. There seems to be a lady and gentleman here. Everything looks neat, but I guess they are poor. They are Americans. The lady does not look well. There is trouble here — they can't get work to do.

But oh, there are so many spirits here. The people have been praying, and, in answer to their prayers, spirits have been sent to them.

The spirit wishes me to go outside, so that I may know the street. It is Endicott Street. There are red houses near, and a store close by. You must find them, and prove him true. I should know this place again.'

With this the medium was restored to her normal condition, and said that she remembered the whole scene. It seemed stamped upon her like a vivid dream, and she knew she should remember the room she had been in, should she see it again.

We started in search of the place, in order to test our spirit friend, and to see what could be done for the family.

We passed through the upper part of the street without any success. We did not expect any there from some cause. Our attention seemed to be directed to the part of the street toward the water

very strongly. Accordingly, we went on, and looked into all the little shops on our way, but had no inclination to enter any of them, until we arrived at a grocery store at the further extremity of the street. This seemed to us to be the place to make inquiry, and we did so. Some would term it a *strange coincidence* which directed our steps to the store just at the time the lady we were in search of was there. Another strange incident is, that (as she of her own accord remarked) she had not been in that store before for some months, as she did not trade there.

We found things as represented by the spirit. The man was in the last stage of consumption; the lady nearly worn out from tending her husband.

In the afternoon, taking with her a friend of ours, who is one of the Lord's stewards, and gladly uses the talent God has given him for the relief of his brethren, Mrs. Conant called, and was shown into a lower room. She still thought she could remember the room the spirit showed her, but she did not recognize this, though she did the lady. The room up stairs, in which the sick man lay, she did recognize, even to the pictures. There was but one alteration, and that was, she did not see the sick man there in the morning vision. This was a complete test, for, when we called a few minutes after the sitting which directed our steps to the house, the invalid was not in that room, but in one which led from it.

Soon after taking a seat beside the bed, Mrs. C. was entranced, and spoke nearly as follows:

'Friends, sufficient for the day is the good or the evil thereof. We have called you here. You would know for what. It is that you may minister to the wants of our brother who is passing away from you to us. He is your brother, and he needs your help to render the remainder of his days among you comfortable, and you have plenty, while he

needs. It is your duty, and will no doubt be your pleasure, to relieve his necessities. This is all we have to say, particularly as our brother is very much exhausted.'

Now, here lay a man who was about to pass away to an undiscovered country — to him. He had, perhaps, often thought that God and the angels had forgotten him. But not so; God had heard his prayer, and had permitted an angel band to gather around him. He had sent his angels to us, who were utter strangers to the sick man and his family, knowing not of the existence of such people, and they bade us to seek out their earthly kindred, and do our duty.

Were this recorded in the Bible, that good book, and record of spirit manifestation, this 'Thus saith the Lord' would be pointed at by the church, as proof of the power, wisdom and love of God for his creatures. Will they rob him of the glory of this proof of his omnipresence and kindness now? Will the skeptical world insult him by crying delusion, because this happened in 1857? Will they tell us he is less powerful now than in the earlier stages of the world, and takes no thought of the sparrows now?

What sweet assurance this visit of the angels must be to him who is passing on to them, of immortality, and of the love of God for all! Will it not give him faith to cross the stream so black and dark to some, without fear? Will the waters be so gloomy to him?

Ah, no! Death is the placid, crystal lake, over whose sweet waters the angels of the Lord bear the spirit, freed from earth, to its happy home, where all is love, purity and peace to him who has improved the talent given him.

And does it not show him, that if the angels can return, in answer to his prayers, to smoothe his passage through the tomb to life immortal, that they will also care for his companion? And will not his God permit him to make one of the band who shall cheer her days on earth?"

MEHITABLE LOTHROP.

The following message, printed in the *Banner of Light* for Sept. 24, 1857, was joyfully recognized by the daughter mentioned in it, as may be seen by reference to the accompanying letter, the publishers being privileged to state that any one desirous of learning more concerning this communication and its endorser, could address Mrs. Gillett, at 76 Wal-
tham Street, Boston, Mass. :

“Over forty years ago I left earth ; and now, after a lapse of years, I return, because called unto by those I leave still in the earth life.

My spirit yearns to guide, to bless them, and to lift from their shoulders the burden I find weighing so heavily there. And yet I find spots of sunshine also, like so many gems lighting up the gloom of the soul. And I must say to those dear ones, have patience and hope, for those bright spots shall yet make the darkness no longer gloomy. They shall wipe out the stain of sin, and give new life to that which has been dead for years.

When I passed from earth, I beheld one, an infant, and I said, ‘Oh, Father, into thy hands I commend this child ; gather me to thyself, but oh, scatter peace about its path, which shall send light wherever it may chance to dwell.’

Time has rolled on, and that child is standing upon the hill of life, as it were between two spheres, waiting to find some new joy, some new hope to bind her still to earth.

But I see that child dwelling on earth a much longer time than she anticipated, and I find joy clustering around her, bearing her soul heavenward. Then, in view of the future, let her have patience, and hope in the present also. And to others dear to me I come to give light and hope, for they have long

been without a ray of sunshine to penetrate their future. Tell them I live — live to bless and to greet them on their journey to the abodes of joy.

A mother's love, however high in the spheres it may have been transplanted, still returns to earth, and entwines about the object of her love — and for what? To draw it nearer herself and the Great Creator of her child.

The ancient speaks of the pitcher being broken at the fountain — of the silver chord being loosed. Can that be love? No! for the pitcher of love cannot be broken — the chord cannot be loosed. But it may be drawn out — one portion nearer God, the other drawn to earth. Oh, tell my dear ones that I am ever with them in love, and that the trials they endure on earth are but bright gems which shall light their passage through the realms of joy. Tell them, then, to hope on, and we shall ever continue to draw them upward in aspiration to ourselves.

From *Mehitable Lothrop* — given by request."

"*Messrs. Editors:* — The test in connection with this communication is this: I was seeking earnestly for evidence of the truth of Spiritualism; I earnestly desired God to give me that proof through the *Banner of Light* by a communication from my mother. The prayer was offered up in secret to God, and I received the answer openly through the mediumship of Mrs. Conant in the *Banner of Light*.

From my early childhood I had had an impression that I should pass away from earth while young. I do not know what gave me that impression, only that my mother died young — at twenty — and I thought I should die about the same age. It never made me unhappy. After that time of my life had passed I never thought any more about it; so it was not anything taken from my mind. Mrs. Conant was entirely unacquainted with everything connected with the whole transaction. I think the impression

was made upon my brain for that very purpose for a test, for my mother passed away when I was only a few days old. Had I not had that impression, I cannot see how she could have given me a test. I asked for proof of the truth of Spiritualism. I have never doubted the return of spirits, under favorable conditions, since.

MRS. H. B. GILLET.

IX.

The preceding selections have been made from the first year of the *Banner's* existence, but scattered through its succeeding volumes are to be found multitudinous epistles from correspondents acknowledging the reliability and correctness of various messages, of which no mention can be made without far exceeding the proposed limits of this book. The verifications to be found in after pages are chosen for their directness, and arranged without regard to chronology. They have all appeared from time to time in the *Banner of Light*.

OLIVER BACON.

This message from a spirit giving the name of Oliver Bacon, a native of Woburn, Mass., during earth life, is thus referred to by one who is well known as an able worker in the field of reform :

“BOSTON, July 12, 1858.

Messrs. Editors : — Having known Capt. Oliver Bacon, of Woburn, — who was quite a remarkable man in his way — I would briefly say that the communication which appeared in the *Banner* of July 3, was to my mind eminently characteristic of him, in the general tenor and compass, in matter and in spirit. I have frequently heard him, in friendly conversation, make use of precisely the same peculiar

expressions and comparisons as are found in the communication. Indeed, the whole message gives every evidence of being his own — an emanation from him.

Yours truly,

GEORGE A. BACON."

EULALIA.

This spirit — heretofore mentioned in the selections taken from the diary of Dr. Pike — first manifested through Mrs. Conant, July 9, 1858. At the close of speaking, she (the influence) said:

"My husband will know me by this name — it is not necessary to give you any other. Please request him to write you in reference to this, that you may know me in future. My husband publishes a paper in California."

This part of the communication was not published with the rest, it being apparently of a private nature, but a request was inserted at the end of the printed message, that any party knowing to the facts contained in it, would reply; in consequence of which this answer was returned by her husband:

"CALAVERAS CHRONICLE OFFICE, }
Mokelumne Hill, Cal., Oct. 3, 1858. }

Messrs. Colby, Berry & Co. — In your paper of Sept. 4 — the *Banner of Light* — I recognize a communication addressed to me from 'Eulalia,' my late wife. I have no doubt of its authenticity, having communicated with her personally before, but for a long time have not been able to receive a communication until I received this through your paper. I understand most of it, but see no propriety in answering it more than as above. * * *.

I remain very respectfully yours,

JNO. SHANNON."

EDWARD COBB.

“My name was, and still is, Edward Cobb. I am a native of Rockland, Me. I was drowned off Cape Ann. Was on board the schooner ‘Laura Francis.’ She foundered at sea. Will you tell my friends that I am quite happy? Have been dead about two months. * * * That was a hard time.” * * *

Upon the publication of this message, the following convincing endorsement of it was received from a gentleman, entirely unknown to the medium or the publishers:

“ROCKLAND, ME., Sept. 23, 1858.

Messrs. Editors:—I see in the last number of your paper (No. 25, Vol. III,) a communication purporting to be given through a spiritual medium, by the spirit of Edward Cobb, formerly of this city.

Mr. Cobb, a young man about twenty years old, son of Capt. Edward Cobb (formerly of this place, now residing in Kansas) left Salem on the 23d of June last, in the schooner ‘Laura Francis,’ Capt. Bullock, for Rockland. The schooner was capsized the same night near Cape Ann. The Captain, together with Mr. Cobb and another man, succeeded in getting into the boat, but the two latter perished before morning, so that the Captain was the only one saved out of the ship’s company, which consisted of four people.

Yours truly,

CHARLES W. SNOW.”

SARAH J. SARGENT.

“*My dear Son:*—They who earnestly desire the best gifts, shall receive them in due time. Therefore, let your desire be like a perpetual fire burning upon the altar of truth, and you shall not be disappointed. Although you may get weary with watch-

ing, and perhaps may lie down to rest ere the messenger comes with glad tidings of great joy, yet he comes. The sweet little child you love so well, promises fair to be a good instrument in spirit hands. Care for him well, and offer him upon the altar of Truth only, and the offer will find acceptance with your God. Be patient, my dear son, and bear well the sorrows of life, for they will all work out for you, a kingdom of happiness in spirit life. Love to all.

Your spirit mother,

SARAH J. SARGENT."

To these loving words from beyond the tomb, the son earnestly responds:

"The spirit communication with the signature of Sarah J. Sargent, published in the *Banner* of April 16, 1859, I recognize, and believe to have been dictated by the spirit of my mother. It was given in response to a mental request that she should visit your medium in Boston, and communicate to me some words of cheer and a mother's counsel. And truly was my prayer heard, and beautifully answered in that communication, also affording me a happy test. Oh, how sweet are the comforts of this soul-inspiring faith! Would that all could be brought into a knowledge of its truth.

C. E. SARGENT."

At a circle held by Mrs. Conant, Nov. 9, 1859, a message was given by a spirit calling himself James D. Farnsworth, who said he had come at the request of outside parties. The communication was at once acknowledged to be correct by James D. Farnsworth Lyons, who wrote — under date of West Randolph, Mass, Dec. 26, 1859, — a lengthy letter, from which the annexed extracts are made:

"*Messrs. Editors:* — I noticed in the *Banner* of Dec. 24, a communication purporting to be from James D.

Farnsworth, of spirit life; 'also a request to those who might recognize this spirit intelligence to respond to its truth, if they could do so without injury to themselves. I feel myself bound to speak the truth at all times, in order to carry out the duty which God has assigned me, and can speak the truth without injury to myself, and feel the assurance that all will be able to do the same in their proper time and season, and stand in fear of themselves and not man. What must be the condition of that man who knows the truth, and yet will bend to his neighbor and become his slave—mentally saying to his master, 'What would you that I should say?' Such a man lacks manhood and everything that constitutes a man; he has eradicated from his nature that brightest jewel that God has given, that makes him in advance of the brute, and therefore becomes the same.

This spirit proves to be a spirit of truth. I was personally acquainted with him in his earth life; in my infancy he gave me my name, (as you see I bear his name) and in my younger years I often listened to his teachings, as he was an Orthodox divine, Since he has passed to spirit life, he has often visited me, and has controlled my organism, as I am susceptible to spirit influence.

We have had communications from him in various ways, and have requested him to communicate through the columns of your *Banner*, and he has responded to the same."

X.

The subjoined tribute to the worth of the Message Department was recently paid by James M. Peebles, whose name is known wherever Spiritualism is spoken of, as a synonym for honesty of purpose and fearless devotion to truth:

“Traveling extensively, and that by an impulse almost irresistible, it is not an uncommon thing to hear of the messages verified, published on the sixth page of the *Banner of Light*. Seldom do we notice them, however, from a lack of time. Pressed with labor, it is often difficult to decide as to the most important work for the hour.

Recently, in Helena, Ark., we met Mr. H. Carnes, the personal friend of Gen. T. C. Hindman, who was assassinated in 1868. The General had heard of and thought upon the subject of spirit communion, and said to this Mr. Carnes, whom he considered a little unsettled upon the subject, that he really wanted to know more of the phenomenon, denominated Spiritualism. Passing suddenly, by violence, into the world of spirits, he says, ‘I promised a friend that I would investigate sometime from a Yankee standpoint and return, if possible.’ Mr. Carnes, of Helena, was *this friend* referred to. And this gentleman informed us that, with the exception of a ‘single word,’ (the conversation *all*) the communication was literally correct and unmistakably his. The *test* was conclusive. Another gentleman, standing by, verified the statement of Mr. Carnes, adding, ‘I knew Gen. Hindman personally, financially and politically. The Banner message sounded just like him.’ Thousands of these messages are doubtless recognized by friends that are never reported back to Boston — a rank injustice! As the *Banner of Light* is not based upon the selfish plan of helping those who help it, but

aims to build up the great principles of the spiritual philosophy, and as it is the only Spiritualist journal which has a Message Department set apart for the spirit world, all lecturers, all media, and all interested in the liberal principles of the age, should make it a point to report these message verifications."

BRIG. GEN. GEORGE B. BOOMER.

This message printed in the *Banner of Light* for Sept. 26, 1868, was at once verified by O. B. Payne, M. D., who wrote from Eldorado, Mo., that he had read with great pleasure the communication from the General; that he had known him well as Colonel of the 26th Missouri Infantry Volunteers (the Doctor being stationed for two years at Division Headquarters as Medical Director) and that no officer could have been more popular than he was throughout the Division of which his regiment formed a part. He was a fine scholar, a genial companion, a brilliant soldier, and an incorruptible patriot. For his gallant conduct as senior Colonel in command of a Brigade, he received, upon recommendation of Gen. Grant, the appointment of Brigadier General, the commission for which, however, did not reach camp till after his death in action before Vicksburg, May 22, 1862. The Doctor further says:

"I was not only well acquainted with the General personally, but also with his style of language in conversation, and had a good opportunity to become conversant with his mode of expressing his thoughts with the pen; and I must say that this communication to your circle is fully characteristic of the man. It seems to me that this is so peculiarly the fact, that his friends in Worcester, Mass., as well as others of the army cannot fail to recognize him through it."

XI.

HEBER C. KIMBALL.

“Before my death I had the pleasure of perusing quite a number of your journals, the *Banner of Light*; and although I could not sympathise with you in all your views, yet I was inclined to believe that the spirit might be able to return and communicate with those it had left in the body after death. And on several occasions I found myself thinking, whenever I did pass on, if your philosophy were true I would visit you, predicating the belief that I could, of course, upon the testimony of those who do return. If others could, I saw no reason why I might not be able to. Inasmuch as you claim a free platform and free speech here, I had no fear of being excluded.

I am well aware that my name, to those who do not believe as I did, is not without stain. I am well aware, that the practice of my faith would be a crime to you, but, in my spiritual state, I am also well aware that the real sin may not lie wholly at my door—at the door of those who believe as I did—but that it may be found with those who profess a different faith. I said, ‘If it be true that spirits can return after death, I will come.’ It is true, but the one half has not been told. ‘If I come,’ I said, ‘I will tell you of the faith of Mormonism, whether I still believe it to be a holy faith, or whether I have changed my views.’ I have to say that in many points I have changed; on some I remain the same. I have learned that every soul lives in a sphere entirely its own. I have also learned that no two souls can, by any possibility, worship the same God. This may seem strange, but I believe it is true. Now, if my God tells me that a certain course of action is the very best I could pursue, I should do wrong to follow in any other way. What a man or woman honestly and truly believes to be right, is to them right. If they have doubts, then it is quite another thing.

I am not here to state wherein I have changed my views; I propose to do so at another time and in another place.

There was much dissatisfaction felt in our church with regard to its durability during the last few years of my life. Was it to stand or fall? No one could answer the question. By some mysterious power the question seemed to have gained admittance to the church; but none could answer it. From all I have been able to learn during my short sojourn in the spirit world, I have to inform my friends on earth that it must fall. It has well-nigh performed its mission—lived its earth life. It must change, must go down in the valley, to rise upon the mount of something better, having parted with its dross—gained something of a purer life, and a better understanding of what God desires of his children on earth.

Mr. Chairman, your spiritual work is indeed a noble one, standing, as you do, between the two worlds, ministering to the needs of all classes, the intelligent and the ignorant, the good and the bad, leading up the benighted ones, and assisting all who need assistance. It is a glorious mission, and I trust you are sensibly impressed with regard to its holiness. You understand it to be God's work, and, because it is, much will be expected at your hands.

To those whom I might have wronged on earth I would send out a prayer for forgiveness. If, in thought or word or deed, I have infringed upon the rights of any—and I am sure I have—I trust I shall not rest till I have paid the debt; till I have obtained forgiveness—that which comes from my own soul. Nothing less can satisfy. I am Heber C. Kimball."

This message was given through Mrs. Conant September 29, 1868, by one of the leading lights of the Mormon church, who passed on, in the full strength of that faith. It is indeed a marked test of individual existence after physical change, that he

should return hinting at, and answering questions which had been asked in that church, of which the publishers of the *Banner* could not have possessed the slightest knowledge. The subjoined extract from a private letter (on file at the *Banner* office) written Feb. 14, 1869, by Mrs. E. D. Smith, of Wheatland, Yuba Co., Cal., shows that the above communication fell under notice of at least one person who did not fear to acknowledge its truth:

“I feel like speaking of a message published in the *Banner of Light* for Dec. 26, 1868, given by the spirit of Heber C. Kimball, one of the heads of the Mormon church. A friend of mine, living here, who was a Mormon for many years, and an intimate friend of the Kimball family, (but who is now a believer in our beautiful philosophy) wishes me to write that the message is characteristic of the man whose name it bears; owing to many conversations with him, she recognizes its style, and is highly gratified to hear from him. His reply to questions which she knew were proposed in the church and by his friends, is to her a strong proof of his identity.”

CHARLES GOODYEAR.

“It is not long since I became a dweller in the spiritual world. But I’ve been there long enough to look round, and consider my own capabilities pretty well.

My life was a struggle here on the earth, and I verily believe that struggle has been lengthened out on to the spirit side. I don’t care to come back here and find fault with the doings of any person or persons on the earth, but I really can’t see why some things should be just as they are.

I was Charles Goodyear. I labored for years to perfect a certain invention to keep your feet dry and

your body entire, to furnish you with ten thousand little articles of comfort, that I thought could be furnished cheaper, and perhaps better, than in any other way.

I spent many a sleepless night, and went many a day without food to satisfy the cravings of a good appetite, because, forsooth, I had n't a dime to buy anything with. It seemed to me that I was obliged to labor in that direction; although my friends said I was insane, was a fool to expend time and money on so useless a thing, still I was absolutely compelled to spend the greater portion of my earthly life delving into the whys and wherefores of this concern.

I conceived the idea that India rubber could be made a most useful agent to mankind. That the idea was a true one, I think I proved to the satisfaction of all parties. Some of my friends would come to me with ideas like this: 'Goodyear, you may spend a life-time upon that invention without realizing anything. It's a wild scheme. You'd better give it up.' Sometimes I thought I would abandon it; then again the impulse would come upon me so strong that I would again toil on.

Well, just as I was about to receive the fruits of my labor, I found I had expended all my vitality for naught, for death soon removed me from my family. Now they are in want. After I have spent years in perfecting an invention that is going to be of great use to those very persons who discouraged my labors, why, I have got the consolation of knowing that my family are in want; yes, while others are reaping a rich reward from my labors. Now this may be right, but I can't understand it to be so. I know it has been said by a good old mind, that the inventor is always poor, and somebody else gets the benefit of his labors. Well, if I haven't proved the truth of that remark, surely no man ever will.

I thought if there was any chance of coming back here and pleading for my family, I ought to do it.

Now I'd say to all those people that are growing rich on account of my invention, if they'll only give the smallest mite to the inventor's family, I think I shall become happy, and reconciled to my new condition.

Now there are some who profess to believe in this glorious philosophy of the spirit's return, and I should like to see something more than a *belief* in Spiritualism, upon the part of such individuals. I should like to see them, too, doing justice to Charles Goodyear's family, and then he'll be better off. Good-day, sir."

The following letter of verification (as well as the message above) eloquently depicts the thorny path which all who benefit mankind must tread — the Calvary which awaits each Saviour who would lead the race to new truth, whether it be of a material or spiritual nature. The endorsement of Mr. Goodyear's message, by our correspondent — a lady residing in Medford, Mass., (whose name and letter are now on file at the Banner office,) is unequivocal.

"*Editors Banner of Light*:—In the *Banner* of Sept. 9, 1865, there is a message from Charles Goodyear. It was the lot of the writer to be acquainted with Mr. Goodyear and his conditions, for several years, dating from the summer of 1836 or '37, and truly they were years of trial, poverty, and suffering, for himself and family; in his message half is not told.

The *New York Ledger*, in an article on Mr. Goodyear from the pen of James Parton, says:

'He [Goodyear] struggled on for five years in debt, with a family, and exposed to the derision or reproach of his friends. Several times he was in the debtors' prison. He sold his effects, he pawned his trinkets, he borrowed from his acquaintances, he reduced himself and his young family to the severest straits. Always supposing himself to be on the

point of success, he thought the quickest way to get his family out of misery was, to stick to India rubber.

In the fifth year of his investigations, a glorious success rewarded him. He made one of the simplest and yet one of the most useful discoveries, which has ever been made in the United States. Overjoyed with his success, he thought his troubles were over. Never was a poor inventor more mistaken. He was thought to be India rubber mad. Two years passed, after he had made the discovery, before he could get any one to believe him. During that period, he endured everything that a man can endure and live. Very often in the coldest day of a New England winter, he had neither food nor fire. Once he had a dead child in the house, and had not the means with which to bury it. * * *

We are informed by a man engaged in the business, that a single firm in the city of New York, sells two million dollars' worth of India rubber belting and engine packing every year. During the civil war more than a million rubber blankets were supplied to the armies.

Charles Goodyear, the inventor, died in the sixty-first year of his age. He literally wore out his constitution in his zeal for developing his discovery. Though he had been for many years a sufferer from disease, his death was somewhat sudden and unexpected. Almost to his last day, he was employed in the work to which his life was devoted. It is not without a pang that we record, that after all his toils and successes he died insolvent, leaving his devoted and gifted wife, the faithful helpmeet and solace of his later years, and a family of six children, the youngest but two months old, without provision. Such is but the common fate of inventors. That very zeal and enthusiasm, which alone enables them to carry out their ideas, deprives them of the substantial reward which other men win by using their discoveries.'

This much from the *New York Ledger*. There is one fact connected with this singular man's life worthy of notice, and which in justice to his memory ought to be made public; it is this: in the midst of his trials, he was continually beset on every side with the din, 'Pay me that thou owest,' and he would answer, 'be patient; when I succeed I will pay every cent.' Many years afterward, he redeemed his word, by paying, so far as he had the means, all who presented their claims. So far as my knowledge extended, he was never accused of any dishonorable acts or intentions, but was looked upon as being deluded by 'vain imaginings,' and I confess to being one of the many who thought him partially insane, therefore the more willingly make this record, earnestly desiring it may in some way benefit his family."

XII.

Three messages being printed as given at the séances by spirits purporting to have been Massachusetts soldiers who passed on in the late civil war, a skeptical correspondent, in a manner at once clear and emphatic, demanded categorically of the publishers if they were reliable. Having no knowledge of the facts in the case, recourse was had by the publishers to the State records in the office of Adjutant General Cunningham, David Wilder, of Boston, acting as their agent — and the entries given below were found, completely disarming the doubter and proving the verity of the statements of the invisibles as to name, place of death, etc., etc. :

"PATRICK FARRELL, Bolton, Co. G, 25th Mass. Vols., died at Newport News, Aug. 14, 1864; aged 33 years."

“ROBERT Mc’CULLOCH, Chelsea, carpenter, Co. C, 35th Reg. Mass. Vols.; killed by falling of a tree, Oct. 1, 1864.”

“HERBERT D. BECKWITH, Fitchburg, Co. F, 57th Reg. Mass. Vols.; died at Petersburg, Va., Jan. 18, 1865, 22 years old.”

JOSEPH YEATON.

“It is but a few months since I was in possession of my own body, and could deal with the things of this world better than I can now.

I had completed my arrangements in Southern Texas, and was just starting for home — my home in Maine — when I was overtaken by the yellow fever, [1] and in a few hours passed on. My wife had passed on before me, [2] and at my death our little ones [3] were left in that country of disease and death, and orphaned.

I am somewhat disturbed by the intense anxiety that seems to permeate the minds of my aged parents, and my brothers and sisters with regard to the disposition of the children, and the settlement of what little property I left. It is that which brings me here. I want to say that I have been informed — and truthfully no doubt — that after leaving this place, I shall be enabled to visit some members of my family, and impress upon them the best course to be taken with regard to the children. I am also informed that I shall be able to aid in rearing them, to watch over them, to do a great deal in their behalf. This I am very glad to know; for when I was first conscious that I was no more of earth, my thoughts of the little family I had left was sad. I did not then know that I could do anything toward assisting those who might care for them; I did not even know that I could return, but I have learned that I can, and I am told that my power will be increased after leaving this place.

I can go to Annie and Katie, [4] I know I can.

[Question by the chairman, Mr. White: Are they your sisters?] Yes, I can impress them clearly with regard to the course that will be best for them to take. When that matter is settled, I shall be happy here, and I doubt not I shall be very unwilling to return.

Please say that you have received this from Joseph Yeaton, of Hallowell, Me., to parents and family."

Two gentlemen — residents of Maine, the spirit's native State in earth life — who were known to Mr. Yeaton while in the physical, have furnished the annexed testimony to the truthfulness of his message :

"Editors Banner of Light:— The communication purporting to be from Joseph Yeaton, of Hallowell, Me., is correct. He died in Texas, [1] and his wife died before him as he states. [2] His two children [3] were sent North. He has two sisters whom he speaks of by their names. [4] They live in Hallowell, Me. He has a sister living here who married Mr. Alden Flye, a neighbor of mine. They are strong sectarians, and they may not inform you that the message is correct.

EDWIN HOVEY.

Damariscotta, Me."

"BANGOR, April 28, 1868.

Editors Banner of Light:— Noticing in your paper of April 25, a communication from Joseph Yeaton, of Hallowell, Me., I called the attention of Mr. Phineas Yeaton, of this city, to it. He says that Joseph Yeaton was his nephew, and that he died in Texas last fall [1] or winter; that the two children [3] were put on board a vessel for New York, and from thence came on alone to Hallowell.

Truly yours, JOSEPH BROWN."

JOEL NASON.

In the *Banner of Light* for June 25, 1870, was published the third message — since the commencement of the circles at that office — from the spirit of Joel Nason. The good advice this spirit gives to his former friends — exemplifying as it does, the beneficial tendencies of the spiritual philosophy — renders this message specially worthy of insertion :

“I am here for a strange errand. I was called for to answer some questions by a party of three in Troy, New York State. They wanted me to tell them what became of the dies I used for counterfeiting purposes. [1] Well, it is not certain I ever had any, and if it was I shouldn't tell them where they are. Spiritualism came into the world for a better purpose than to tell people how to do wrong ; to lead them further astray than they would go without it. I do not come here to plead my own innocence, nor to set myself up for a saint. I have communicated before, [2] and I have before told many of my shortcomings when I was here. Now it is very evident that the parties that called me to their council or circle are believers, firm believers in the return of spirits, and in their power to do many things for mortals. Well, they have gained a good deal in having gained that. But if they are going to make use of the knowledge for any such purpose as they seem inclined to, it will become a spade, that will dig their own graves for them, put them in and cover them up. They may be sure of that. I give them fair warning here to make no further use, nor try to, of Spiritualism as they have tried to — and have succeeded to a certain extent ; because if they do, this same Spiritualism will throw off their cloak and show them to the world for what they are. I would advise them to consult spirits for purposes that will

elevate them as spirits, for it is not going to be a very long time before they lay off their bodies, and they will be poor indeed in this world if they do not shape their course differently from what they have for the last seventeen years.

I was not able at that time to answer their question as I wanted to, and thought I would come here and answer it. Of course they will expect something different. But if I gave them what they deserve I should give their names, and attach characters to them that would not be so very bright. But I forbear, hoping that they will see that they are on the wrong track, turn about, live different lives, and make Spiritualism a guide to diviner things than they have ever known yet. Now they are living down in materialism. They are steeped in it, through and through. Spiritualism is able to take them out of it if they only express a wish to be taken out. But I warn them not to make Spiritualism a tool to help them in their deviltry here.

I am Joel Nason, of Boston. You remember me? Good day; good day."

Two correspondents (strangers to the publishers, or the medium, be it remembered, and living in widely diverse sections of the country,) who were acquainted with Mr. Nason during his earth life, have certified to the reality of his message in letters which speak for themselves:

"SALEM, MASS., July 25, 1870.

Messrs. Editors:—Looking over your Message Department of June 25, I saw a communication from Joel Nason; about eight years ago he gave two communications through the *Banner of Light*, and as I have not seen any response in your paper, recognizing Mr. Nason as an inhabitant of your good city, I thought I would tell you what I knew of him when a

boy, or forty years ago. Mr. Nason lived at that time in Hanover Street, about opposite to what is known now as Police Station No. 1. He lived in a brick house, on the street, while up in his yard he owned another house, in which my brother-in-law lived. While he lived there Mr. Nason's house took fire from a forge which he used down in his cellar; he was a blacksmith by trade, or a maker of edge tools. After the fire Mr. Nason employed Mr. Peirce, my brother-in-law, to pick over the rubbish and save all the axes, and other things of value he might find; amongst the rest, was a great number of dies, mostly for foreign coin; these dies were ordered to be taken into the house as soon as found. Mr. Nason was not a very communicative man; he attended to his own business, and gave everybody around him to understand that they must do the same. He was called a very straightforward man in all his deeds. I never heard of his counterfeiting, [1] but I supposed he had those dies for some purpose. He built a house after the fire on the opposite side of the street, just below Police Station No. 1; a kind of a half house with gable roof, slanting one way. When he built it, many said it was a fair sample of Nason's oddity. I visited the place a short time since; the house had been moved back to make the street wider; I inquired of many in that vicinity if they ever knew Joel Nason, but none knew him; yet we are thankful to know that 'he still lives' to make himself known.

Yours, &c., H. W. CLEMONS."

"SPRINGFIELD, ILL., July 21, 1870.

Editors Banner of Light:—In the *Banner* of June 25th is the third communication you have published from the spirit of Joel Nason; and though he was a Boston man, you have given no verification of his messages. I was a resident of Boston in 1830; and needing a nice job done to some machinery, I was directed to the shop of Joel Nason. At

the same time, I received the intimation that he was supposed to be in some way concerned in counterfeiting bank notes. [1] We, wife and I, had been previously acquainted with a sister of his, who was married to a respectable mechanic. She had been educated in the Calvinistic teachings of Dr. Emmons; and during a revival season she read 'Edwards on the Affections,' and ultimately became insane; and died by her own hand, in the Insane Asylum. She had adopted two nieces; and while one of them was visiting us, we had the honor of a call from her uncle, Joel Nason.

Yours for truth and progression,
JULIUS A. WILLARD."

XIII.

J. WALTER WALSH.

As stated by Brother Peebles, a large number of the messages which appeal as true to the hearts of those for whom they are intended, are passed by in silence, and their receivers "make no sign." The lessons conveyed in these statements of the so-called "dead" to their friends in mortal, are often of a nature to provoke the opposition of the churchman and the ridicule of the thoughtless; but here and there the seed drops into the fruitful soil of appreciating hearts, and with commendable honesty and fearlessness the message is verified as true by them.

At a séance held at the Public Free Circle Room — Mrs. J. H. Conant, medium — September 18th, the following message was given, and was printed in the *Banner of Light* for Nov. 18th:

"Some ten years ago I frequently received and read with interest your *Banner of Light*. I was at that time a publisher in San Francisco, Cal. [1] I never

could make up my mind you were advocating a truth, although you presented many evidences that such was the case; yet after all, if there was truth, it didn't reach me; but I confess to being very much interested in the *Banner*. Reverses came to me by sickness and imprudence, and nine days ago I took my exit from the body, in the poor-house. [2]

I have many friends in New Orleans, who are favorably inclined to this beautiful spiritual philosophy. They do not know of my death, and, when they hear of it, will doubtless be shocked at my going out as I did; but, I have to say, it was all in the order of my being, for there is a truth, grand and beautiful, in this aphorism:

“There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them as we may;”

A power leading us perhaps from the throne to the dungeon, from places of trust and high position to the poor-house. It may be decreed in the horoscope of the millionaire that he shall die a pauper. It is useless to attempt to fathom the whys and wherefores of our fragmentary lives — the parts that go to make up our human existence — but if we have faith in a divine, over-ruling Presence in one thing, it seems to me we ought to have faith in all things.

To the friend, who is an editor — I will not say of what, because I know his feelings in this regard — dwelling in New Orleans, to whom I once sent a copy of the *Banner of Light*, requesting that he would write me what he thought of it, and who answered in brief, saying, ‘It isn't worth a picayune,’ I have to ask that he will analyze the presence, power, or spirit that has stretched out a hand toward him from over the river of death to-day. In a word — if it is not J. Walter Walsh, who is it? If it is, the *Banner* is worth something more than a picayune, at least to me, for it is a vehicle of exchange that I can find nowhere else. To him it is a key-note to immortality.”

The straightforward way in which the information is given by the spirit, shows a mind while on earth accustomed to concentration of thought—a habit which is a necessity to those connected with the press. Below are given extracts from two letters endorsing the message; the writers of said notes being strangers to those connected with the *Banner*:

“SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., Nov. 25, 1871.

Editors Banner of Light:—The communication in your last issue from J. Walter Walsh is correct, so far as relates to his publishing a paper here, [1] and, through his own imprudence, dying in the almshouse. [2] I was not acquainted with him, but have frequently heard my husband and friends speak of him. * * * My attention was also directed to the notice of his death in the *San Francisco Morning Call*, which took place, as he says, in the almshouse. * * * I believe the paper which J. W. Walsh published here was called the *Sunday Varieties*, or some such name as that.

With sisterly love,

MRS. H. WILSON.”

“SAN RAPHAEL, CAL., Nov. 28, 1871.

Messrs. Editors:—I recognize in your issue of Nov. 18, a message from J. Walter Walsh, strikingly characteristic of the man when in earth life. He was editor and proprietor of a paper called the *Sunday Varieties*. [1] * * * The date and particulars of his death as given are strictly correct, and I am happy to be able to verify the same, as I have many previous messages, in your paper. He died in the almshouse. [2]

Respectfully yours,

MILO CALKIN.”

CAPT. WILMOT SEIDERS.

"I do not know that I can say anything that will add a single feather's weight to the enormous amount of testimony that has already been received in favor of this great spiritual tidal wave, that seems destined now to flood everything, and to become more of a reality than the old fable of Noah's flood ever was; for while that only flooded a few acres of God's soil, this Spiritualism — if we mistake not — is destined to flood the whole world, and to create out of it the new heaven and the new earth, prophesied of by ancient seers.

I am no preacher, nothing but a "sea-dog;" yet the experience I have had during the twenty odd years I have been in the spirit world has led me to know that this spiritual tide that ebbs and flows now with such certainty, is a fixed fact, and they who ride highest upon its crested waves will catch the grandest truths, and they who try to shirk it and to shrink from it will get submerged; there's no help for them. They had better come into the ark of truth; it's better than old Noah's ark ever was. It takes within its walls more than two of every kind; it takes the whole.

My friends — those of them who are left here on the earth, I understand — desire to know how, exactly how I stepped out of this life. They never knew, so they say. Well, I was from New York, had left freight and passengers at Havana, and was bound for Pensacola, when I was overtaken by one of those storms that are peculiar to that coast at certain seasons of the year. Instead of being able to keep the open sea, I was driven upon a coral reef, and foundered. All hands perished, every one. Just as we were going down I saw what seemed to me to be a phantom ship in the air. This phantom ship seemed to be hailing us; the commander seemed to be telling us we were safe. This phantom ship proved to be a spiritual ship that was cruising there, and when ours foundered it took us on board.

Now, this is a strange story to tell, but, my God! it is a true one. It was just the condition of life that was necessary for us, and so we were ushered into the spirit world in just that way.

I think there were some four besides myself who saw this ship, and were so absorbed in the contemplation of it that they missed the fear of death. I did; and they have told me since that they did.

My wife was on board with me, and told me that she never stopped to think of the danger we were in, for she was in such an ecstatic state, contemplating this ship and the beautiful forms it contained, she had no room to think of anything else. And so, when the waters closed over our ship and we went down, our spirits rose and were taken on board this ship, and we were welcomed there by an old sea captain I had known on earth. I had known him when a boy. He says to me, 'Wilmot, I am glad to welcome you. Welcome home on board my ship.'

I said, 'We are drowned.' 'No, no; your bodies were, but you are here, all of your entire crew and passengers, on board my ship—all safe.' 'Where are you bound?' said I. 'I am bound to a port of peace, to a harbor of safety,' he replied.

I found that ship just as much of a reality as my own ever had been. I walked her decks as I walked my own. I scarcely realized the change until my friends on earth were apprized of my disaster, and their sorrow for me recalled me to my real condition. And then I experienced for a brief time what might be called grief, or a reflection of their grief. So, you see, my death was rather a pleasurable one, and I only hope that those who remain of our family may find the change as easy and as beautiful as I did. Capt. Wilmot Seiders, to his sisters, who remain here."

The subjoined letter from the sisters of Captain Seiders presents testimony to the reliability of his

statements, as far as material evidence can be produced :

“BOSTON, Sept. 23, 1872.

Editors Banner of Light :—It was with pleasure that we perceived in the Message Department of the *Banner of Light*, dated Sept. 21, 1872, a communication from our brother, Capt. Wilmot Seiders, as delivered at a séance held May 14th at the Free Circle Rooms. We desire to bear witness to the entire truthfulness of the spirit's utterances as far as our information extends. Our brother passed away at sea, as stated in his characteristic way, and we are assured that Mrs. Conant could not by any possibility have obtained the knowledge concerning his demise in any other way than is claimed, viz., that his spirit, entrancing her, spoke the words reported. She had, we are certain, never heard his name, which is a peculiar one. He was once or twice incidentally referred to in her presence as ‘the big canoe man,’ by an Indian influence controlling Mrs. Campbell, no mention of his relationship being made at the time. We have sedulously avoided any reference to him in presence of Mrs. Conant, hoping that in time he would return through her, and thus offer a test, of a perfectly convincing character, that could not be attributed to the previous knowledge of the medium. This wish of ours he has fully met, and we feel deeply grateful to him therefor, and to the medium of communion through whom his words have reached us.

We remain, sirs, respectfully,

MRS. FRANK CAMPBELL,
MISS M. A. SEIDERS.”

PART X.

SPECIMEN ESSAYS AND INVOCATIONS.



PART X.

“As yonder tower outstretches to the earth
The dark triangle of its shade alone
When the clear day is shining on its top,
So, darkness in the pathway of man’s life
Is but the shadow of God’s providence
By the great sun of wisdom cast thereon —
And what is *dark* below is *light* in heaven!”

—J. G. Whittier.

I.

The acknowledgment of a source of power outside of and above humanity, has been instinctively made by the race in all ages of time and under all conditions of development; and a desire to propitiate such, by whatever name designated, has been shown in forms rude and cruel, or sweet and soul-elevating, as accorded with the degree of enlightenment existing among the people so manifesting. That hardy skepticism which would make creation “groan on in its cast iron harness” of fixed, immutable laws, organized and tabulated in the long gone past, either by a force which is no longer found in the universe, or by a God who when his work was finished retired and left it to operate in daylight or midnight according to a plan which he will not or cannot now revise, is not the representative idea which fills the mind of the major portion of mankind. The plain of prosperity is the chosen

field wherein it disports itself; but in hours of trial the hearts of even the unreflecting sweep beyond its limits to the attainment of a grander consolation which they may not there find. Among the earliest teachings at the séances of Mrs. Conant occurred these passages with reference to prayer:

“No man need ask how to pray, for if he knew himself he would know that every desire of the spirit is a prayer—every aspiration a prayer. * * * When sickness and sorrow have laid their hands heavily upon you, who does not know how to pray? Not one! ’t is then through sorrow the interior voice is heard and obeyed.”

Allen Putnam has beautifully said in this regard:

“In times of deep distress, in hours of conscious helplessness, the heart often yearns for and gets such help as man and the outer world alone can never give. Whence that yearning—that prayer? From the head or from the heart? Can it be an outflow from the deliberate reasoning faculties? No. The rushings of the waters indicate a more gushing fountain—a more impulsive force. Jets from the lower depth of being stream up high above the *common level* of life’s waters; they come from fountains which the intellect generally fails to recognize; whose properties reason’s chemistry cannot analyze; whose elements do not become factors in the problems which logic solves.

There are deeper depths in man than the intellect usually fathoms, or science often deals with. Up from out such hidden wells there sometimes rush forces which, with the voice of an indwelling God, bid intellect be still, and not obstruct the loves—those deeper, higher powers—faculties peculiarly taught of God, that intuitively sense His presence; that are themselves the hiding places of His power, and which now rush up to hold and help the soul in the hour when its crushing needs are upon it, and in which reason can find no way to help. Prayer by the higher and inner faculties is natural and helpful. * * * In many a dark and anguishing hour, when reason could see no ray of light, could find no soothing balm, many mortals have sensed help compassing them about in the unseen; have sensed saving power in the realm of mystery; have felt and thence believed that prayer could be heard and answered.”

So much for the intuitional phase of the question. But the case does not rest here—the witness, Science, is summoned to prove that these feelings and their concomitants are not the exercise of “imaginative beggary,” or the dream-built nihilisms of impotent hypochondria. Dr. J. R. Buchanan, the indefatigable pioneer in the field of anthropological inquiry, in a recent essay, has set forth the fact that his experience in his chosen field of research, based upon multitudinous experiments, foreshadows the yet to be more fully developed fact that there are recondite brain organs whose faculties can fully receive their legitimate and predestined unfoldment only through acts of aspiration—through genuine prayer to something higher than self. He says:

“The cerebral organism of inspiration is more occult than that of ordinary intellect. The organs of the external perceptions, and of the memory and reason based upon them are developed in the forehead, and their exterior growth and expansion may be seen at a glance. But the more occult faculties concerned in inspiration have more occult organs. They lie upon the median line, where each hemisphere of the brain confronts the other, and thus have an interior development against the *falx cerebri*, which can scarcely be estimated externally.

This interior region of the brain, extending from the forehead back on the median line, is the occult region of the more occult faculties, which, as they occupy an interior position, belong also to the most interior nature of man. These are the organs of those spiritual faculties which are not dependent upon the ordinary channels of sense, which are the least physiological and most psychological of all our endowments.

In a comprehensive way it may be said that the intellectual function of these organs is INTUITION—the direct apprehension of truth, which is seized without any process of external sensuous perception and reasoning, by which the exterior organs give rise to opinions. * * * It may be sufficient to present distinctly the broad proposition irrespective of anatomical details, that there is a central unitary region in the brain, and that in

that region the higher intuitional and spiritual phenomena have their location—that there is a region of later development in the individual, and of a higher, subtler organization for the higher functions it assumes.”

Thus it will be seen that both the swift arrow of intuitive perception, and the slow-moving shadow-finger of science along the dial plate of time, point surely to the importance of prayer as a proper exercise of faculties appropriate and natural, which cannot fail of bringing the spirit *en rapport* with wiser intelligences above it, thereby subserving and super-inducing ends of harmony and use. It would seem that Spiritualists—whose belief claims to rest upon both scientific and intuitional grounds—should, more than all other classes of moralists, recognize the utility of prayer.

As every religious system has defined for itself the power to which it prays, and has walked after the manner of its chosen deity, the skeptic reading these pages may be led to inquire what is the nature of that God of whom Spiritualism teaches and to whom the Invocations offered through its media are addressed? While the broadest latitude on this subject is claimed and exercised among its believers, the majority of communicating intelligences, through countless mediums all over the civilized world since the advent of the modern phase of spirit intercourse, have declared that God is a principle, not a person, and abides in all things. The matter has recently been succinctly stated by Allen Putnam in his reply to the questions: “Where and what is your prayer-hearing God?”

“It is in, below, around, and above all. It is everywhere.

Man cannot be where it is *not*. I sense it wherever I am, or have been. Such is my answer to the *where*?

And now for the *what*? It is the omnipresent, all-pervading *spirit-universe* — both whatever helps to constitute that universe and also all things contained in it — *its one all-animating principle*, together with each fiery spark of individualized intelligence which that all-animating principle has ever emitted, including also all the activities of, and emanations from, the world of souls.

It is anything, organized or not, in the Great Unseen, that man can avail himself of to gain spiritual light, spiritual growth, spiritual power, or any other good thing whatsoever, whether temporal or spiritual. To such a God, the higher faculties in man which want and yearn for more than this world of the outer senses can either give or take away — to *such* an Unseen Spiritual the higher faculties may pray, rationally believing that ‘*the soul’s sincere desire*’ can be felt on the other side of the screening veil — that it may attract the sympathies and bestir the activities of listening angel hosts.”

Those who fear the hitherto iconoclastic blows of the Spiritual Philosophy as given through its media upon established habits of life and customs of thought, are assured that in its constructive phase — yet, as it were, undisplayed — lies its chief seat of power. Truly has it been said that it is not the purpose of returning spirits to tear down, but to spiritualize all things connected with theologic research. Spiritualism comes not as a blasting comet to sear, like a branding iron, the conscience and moral sense of the 19th century, but as “another morn risen at midnoon,” to shed its glorious radiance, in conjunction with all that *is*, or helps the race *to be* good and pure, world-wide among the children of men! It comes not to make a homeless orphan of the blind devotee to creed, who humbly kneeling in the sanctuary, expects one day, in fervent faith, to meet his Father, where, beyond that “sea of glass mingled with fire.”

the gleaming battlements of the New Jerusalem are vibrating the cadence of that one tremendous song: "Holy, holy, holy Lord!" but to open his inner sight, and teach him the grand *spiritual* meaning of the vision of the Apocalyptic seer, which either the ignorant misconception of the past has failed to perceive, or its self-interest has purposely ignored. Spiritualism comes not to say "Thou fool!" to the stern materialistic philosopher, who standing immovably upon his two feet, makes his stiff, half-military salute to the shrine of Reason alone! No. It honors him even as in the words of the martyr of Galilee "the Queen of the South" was honored, who "came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon," but it also firmly proclaims to him that "A greater than Solomon is here!" — that Reason is mighty in materiality, but *intuition*, speaking the home-language of the soul, must ever win in hours when that soul is most aroused to a consciousness of its surroundings in the physical, and its prospective conditions yet to come. Spiritualism teaches that down the spiral staircase of the spheres, in answer to aspiration from the lower, the inspiration of the higher comes, and that he who hopes for influx from the next stage of being above him, must see to it that he makes room in his soul to receive it by imparting all he may possess which is fitted to the advancement of those next beneath him — that there is no magazine where spiritual food may be held for selfish purposes from his brother man; but that like the manna of the desert-wandering Israelite, whatsoever is gathered more than suffices for actual daily needs, will be found to be worthless in the morning! It teaches, in a

word, that diviner sense of prayer which, syllabled or unuttered, is matched with deeds for its own accomplishment.

II.

In the early history of the *Banner of Light* free séances, and even until sometime after the inauguration of the Circle Room at 3½ Brattle Street, Boston, the meetings were not opened by any stated prayer or invocation addressed to the Supreme Being, or First Cause. The exercises were generally prefaced by miniature essays pronounced either upon subjects embodied in questions propounded by the audience, or chosen by the invisibles themselves, such as "Death," "Immortality," "The Duty of the Natural to the Spiritual Man," "Spirit Spheres," "Evil Spirits," "What is Magnetism?" "How is Man allied to God," etc., etc.—two of which are here presented as specimens of the matter and style of the early utterances at these séances, through the organism of Mrs. Conant :

“‘And he hath the keys of Hell.’ And he hath the ‘keys of Heaven,’ also. And he saith unto you whatsoever I do, ye may do also. Whatsoever I have ye may have. Therefore I behold in the hands of mortals the keys of Heaven and Hell also. And unto every man that seeketh to gain Heaven, glorious light from the celestial spheres shall come; and unto him who seeketh for Hell, within his soul the fires of Hell shall burn. Christ was fashioned in the image of Purity, and Wisdom sat enthroned upon him. Mortals of the present day are also fashioned in the image of God, and Wisdom sitteth upon them also. But the signs of the times have been flitting upon the

smooth face of the waters, and, like so many bubbles, are leading the children of God on after that which will vanish like them. Nature, or the God of Nature, has endowed all her children with purity, and all mankind are again destined to become pure. However dark the clouds which clothe the soul, Nature shall carry far into oblivion those garments, and he shall stand pure before his Creator, his Father. You children, who are traveling through the dark wilderness below, have a guide within which will point you home. Home! where is the home of the spirit? Do we find it in haunts of misery, do we find it among those who present a direful spectacle? The body may for a time grovel there, but the spirit *will* soar upward to meet its God. I look upon the sphere of earth, and I find growing there many beautiful plants; within some of these plants I find a poison, and in others a balm. Now they all present a like appearance to me in the external, but I look within with a spiritual eye, and quickly I detect a good or evil beneath it. And thus it may be with you children. So live that you may penetrate far beyond the act, the look, and read the souls of men. For each child is going on in spirit, while the body ofttimes keeps it entombed within a sepulchre. I see groups of angels around you mortals, who seek to benefit you, and I find upon the brows of those angels the word Love; and as they draw nigh unto you, I find pure waters gushing out from the fountain of their souls, flowing down to you, teaching you to hope for better things, and calling for power to come down upon you from above.

Oh that you mortals could see yourselves as ye are seen—that ye could see the changes which are going on in spirit life for you. You would then realize the full import of my words, when I tell you ye have the keys of Heaven and of Hell in your own hands.”

"KNOW THYSELF.

How shall man know himself, unless he first becomes acquainted with the laws of his being. Man is a spirit, an undying and everlasting spirit, and if he would know himself, he must first study the spirit; and in order to accomplish that, he must enter in thought the portals of the spirit world, and gather his wisdom thence. He may dive in vain into the bowels of the earth for wisdom, but let him ascend in the spiritual sphere, and he there finds a mine in which pearls of great price await his labors.

And how shall mortals accomplish this, except in the way God hath given? From the foundation of this material earth, there always have been certain organisms through which spirit power has been manifested, and through them you must reach the spirit spheres, and draw thence your wisdom. If these organisms are imperfect, you will receive imperfection; but if they are perfect, as Jesus was perfect, then you receive wisdom, without the taint of error. If our mediums are imperfect, how shall we give you pure water? Now, in coming through these channels, it receives a part of the impurities they are subject to; but the time will soon come when the channels through which these living waters flow, shall be pure, and then, and not till then, shall they reach you in the purity of spirit life. All matter is subject unto spirit, wherever it abides, and thus far the spirit world must govern the natural; and is it wonderful, if they do govern you, that they cannot commune with you? Is there anything your Creator cannot perform, anything He cannot penetrate? We think not. We heed not the past, we look to the present. Ours is to gain a victory in the future. You, in your existence, must travel back for ages to gain positive proof that spirits have the power to commune with mortals; if they did then, why not now? Are the doors of the spirit world closed? We think not;

ours and yours are so united together, that one cannot exist without the other. Our spiritual home is allied to your home. Who annexed the two worlds? Jehovah! Who shall divide them?—shall man? Never. Therefore, if the two worlds are bound together, they shall march on, until there shall be none to doubt their unity.

The skeptic says no, but does he give you proof of his assertion? He cannot furnish the spirit of man with a reasonable proof of the assertion. No, his proof is as naught; it cometh like the flower in the morning, and the sun cometh and scorcheth it, and it withers and falls to the ground.

This should prove to you, children, that you have something to do. Go back upon that which has been to you a Saviour, and walk upon the sands of olden time, to see if you do not find positive proof for the star of your time. The star which rose in the time of Jesus never sets; it is in the horizon of the present and of the future. Then rejoice that you live to-day; that you have power to travel back in history's pages, and compare the past with the present time, and judge what the future may be from the comparison.

You live for something; all mankind live for something, and if you wrap up your talents in the dross of earth, how shall you prepare your minds for life eternal? How shall you attain that heaven Deity destines you to attain? Ah, you will attain it in the end, for all must be brought to God; but you cheat yourselves of years of happiness, and bend the soul in misery, when, if you will, you may attain to the high happiness of heaven, in the former existence. And why may you not attain this happiness; ah, why not? Bigotry cries out 'False Christs;' all the voices of sectarianism cry out, 'Stand still, and let God come to you,' when He who hath reigned forever hath bid you to follow Him. Oh, rest in His arms, be guided by His counsel here, and He

will give you proof that He sends his messengers to speak to the children of earth.

Go back for proof of our coming to past generations, and you will find more than you know what to do with. Jesus said, Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. Oh, then go forward, knocking at every door where truth is to be found, seek at every temple where Jesus dwells, then shall you not fail to find joy, and peace, and truth. Come, and to-day you may find; wanderers of earth, struggle no longer with things of earth, but seek to be acquainted with the things of the spirit.

May the blessing of Him we serve be with you; may He send holy guides to lead you; may he aid you in opening the closed doors of the spirit world; may he aid you in studying the mysteries of the spirit's home; may he fashion your spirits so that you may be true and acceptable dwellers in the land of the redeemed.

This is the constant prayer of your friend Channing, for all mankind."

III.

The first formal invocation to be traced in the history of these circles—at least the first which has found publicity in the Message Department of the *Banner of Light*, occurred at a séance held Oct. 19, and was printed in the issue of Saturday, Oct. 29, 1859, (No. 5, Vol. VI.) The intelligence uttering this pioneer petition from the spirit side of life neglected to furnish its name, but the subject matter is offered for comparison with those given at the present time through the same medium:

"Thou Great, Eternal Source of Life, we will offer praise unto thee, because thou hast so liberally blessed

us; because thou hast overshadowed us continually with the wings of thy wisdom and thy love.

We praise thee, oh God, in behalf of the many souls in spirit-life because of the gifts of to-day; because, in thy wisdom, thy power and thy goodness, thou hast been pleased to keep in sacred state, in mortal form, this gift thou permittest us to use at this moment.

Almighty Father of Heaven and Earth, we would praise thee in behalf of the inhabitants of earth-life, praise thee because thou art shedding thy light over the earth; because the firmament is being studded with many new stars, called forth by the hand of Progress and the finger of time.

Oh, Thou Great Eternal, wilt thou be pleased to look upon the gathered few who are here to commune with those in mortal? Give them of thy strength, that they may look beyond the dividing line which separates them from their friends in mortal. And as their messages are borne across this river, wilt thou send messengers of Hope and Faith beyond the spirit land, that each message, when it reaches their people, may find a response of joy that shall echo in the spirit land.

Bless, oh Holy Father, thy children in mortal, who are present with us to-day. May they each one feel, yea, know, that they are overshadowed continually with thy love; that although their path is seemingly crowded with thorns, fine flowers grow thereon that shall yield fragrance in spirit life.

May they, oh God, praise thee for each shadow that falls upon their pathway; for as the night be-tokeneth the morning, may they feel that when the shadow is darkest, they are nearing the morning of the loving light. May they, whilst walking through the dark spheres of earth-life feel the continual presence of some bright one that shall point them to scenes that are brighter, beyond the earth-life.

Almighty Father, do thou give unto all the inhab-

itants of the lower degree of life a due knowledge of the Truth, for Truth is the bright star that shall lead all thy children to thee. Do thou, oh Holy One, so inspire each seeker for Truth, that he may seek with wisdom, and receive with power and glory. Do thou bless every spirit that hath life, whether in the higher walks or the path of the humble. And to thee be all praise and power, now and evermore."

The next invocation of which record is made, occurred under the head of "The Messenger," in the issue for January 21st, 1860 (No. 17: Vol. VI;) it was delivered at a séance held by Mrs. Conant, Nov. 28th, 1859, and reads as follows:

"Oh, thou God of Nations, we offer thanks unto thee for the blessings we daily receive from thee. We praise thee in behalf of the great family thou hast on earth, that by so doing we may draw to our aid such high and holy intelligences as are so much needed on this dark earth-plane.

Our Father, as the earth yields up her hidden treasures to the embrace of yonder sun, so we will yield up every gift thou hast given us, when thou callest for them. Thou hast taught us to occupy all thou hast given us, and to return thee more at thy bidding, thus fulfilling the law of our nature, and worshiping thee, thou God of Nations.

Oh, our Father and King, we view some before us to-day who have recently been called upon to part with those near and dear to them. Thou hast called in wisdom, and they have reluctantly yielded up their treasure. But, oh, our God, we know thou wilt send a comforter; thou wilt not sunder material ties unless thou hast power to restore that harmony that appears lost. We praise thee in their behalf, knowing that in thy wisdom thou hast drawn them another step from earth. And, oh God, may they profit by the call; may every avenue of their souls

yield to thee, saying, 'Oh God, thou hast called, and we give thee.'

Oh, Saviour of Souls, look especially upon thy children who are here to-day. While they come for gems of wisdom from spirit spheres, oh, do thou send mighty messengers, that the seed sown may spring up to thy honor and thy glory.

Send us, oh Spirit of Power and Wisdom, the Angel of Peace; may he whisper in his own language to every soul here; and while he whispers, may each spirit be in a condition to hear and to receive; for peace may find an abiding place, even on earth. The whirlwind may sweep over us on earth, yet the Angel of Peace may find a place to dwell in.

Oh, bless all thy children, either in upper spheres or in lower hells. Bless those who call not upon thee for blessings. We are strong, and thou biddest us to strengthen those who are weak. If they call not upon thee, we will call for them, knowing that thou wilt hear and answer to-day or in the future."

The above, so replete with the spirit of trustful submission, and comfort for those that mourn, is also printed without a name. Glancing along the file of the Banner Message Department, the next invocation is found in the issue of May 12, 1860 (No. 7: Vol. VII,) after which date this form of introducing the services grows more and more common, till upon the inauguration of the séances at the new room (No. 3) in the Parker Building, 158 Washington Street — (which occurred Tuesday, July 9th, 1861) — it becomes the general rule. The invocation delivered on that occasion — to which no name is appended — reads as follows:

"Oh, Father, while all things beneath us in nature offer up praises unto thee, shall we forget to acknowl-

edge thee in every hour, and every moment of our lives? Do we not know that thou art the Father and the Creator of all conditions of life, of light as of darkness, of evil as of good? We will not forget, oh Father, to praise thee for all, for all are good in thy sight.

Oh God, we thank thee that we are again enabled to take upon us the fleshy tabernacle of humanity, and from the body of death to offer praises unto thee. Though the flesh is weak, and though we know darkness may shroud the earth for a time, yet we know the clouds shall break away, and we shall behold thy shining face.

Oh God, shall we ask thee to bless thy children of humanity? We know all thou doest is in blessing, and that thy arms of love encircle all thy children. Thou, oh God, but knowest the wants of all who call thee Father, and so we ask thee for nothing, for thou blessest us in everything and alway. Whatever conditions we find around us we will accept and bless thee for, believing they are right and good.

Oh Divine Spirit of the Universe, we would thank thee also in behalf of thy great family, who seem to forget thee. For them as for all, we know thy guardian care is extended, and, like all things in lower nature, they shall learn to continually bless thee."

The circles were at first conducted anonymously, no name being given by the supervising intelligence till in the issue of February 10, 1866, we find the séances held December 5 and 11, 1865, announced as "closed" by Willie Lincoln and Thomas Paine respectively. After this date at intervals the names of Robert Owen, William E. Channing, Joseph Brant, Luther V. Bell, M. D., William Berry, T. Starr King, Theodore Parker, (who first appears by name in connection with these circles at a séance held Jan-

uary 23, 1866,) Father Henry Fitz James, (first mentioned at the close of a séance held March 1, 1866,) and numerous others are given as "opening" or "closing" the sittings. In course of time the custom of announcing the controlling intelligence at each séance became established in its present form.

From the original spirit messages — the foundation of the séances — as a natural sequence, flowed answers to queries propounded by the audience, at first concerning the spirits speaking, but gradually broadening out into the examination of other themes. After awhile sealed letters were presented for consideration by those who could not be in attendance, and in time this mode of obtaining replies to questions was adopted by many present who did not wish to offer them orally. The first instance wherein formal mention is made as to their being so answered, is contained at the close of the report of a séance held October 2, 1866, when the spirit of Charles A. Davis is recorded as performing the duty. The regular order of exercises now followed at the circles consists of an invocation, succeeded by the consideration of questions, then individual messages, and the closing phase of briefly answering sealed letters.

The following selections, from the great mass of invocations which for so many years have been given thrice a week through the lips of Mrs. Conant at these circles, are offered to the public, together with the names of the spirits purporting to give them, ending with that of Theodore Parker, the President of the Circle, that each heart may appropriate that which most appeals to its needs.

REV. JESSE B. FERGUSON.

The following address to the Soul of Goodness, is from the spirit of Rev. Jesse B. Ferguson, once a well known Methodist preacher of high repute in Tennessee; afterwards, a faithful worker in the field of Spiritualism:

“Oh thou who art without beginning or end, nameless, yet having all names, formless, yet having all forms, we praise thee. In our semi-savage intelligence we praise thee. Looking out through the darkness of our own individuality to the glory of eternity, we are dazzled and confused; and we ask for strength, we ask for wisdom, we ask for all those higher attributes that belong to the soul's high estate. We look back through the darkness from which we came, and even in our littleness we understand that we have been cared for tenderly by thee; that our every hour has been watched over and blessed by thee; and although we have been scourged by many stripes, yet it has been all in love, and for our highest, our divinest good. This we see, oh Soul of Goodness, and for it we praise thee. And now that we are enfranchised from the darkness incident to the mortal life, we ask that we may return to those who still remain, giving them strength, inspiring them with faith, and leading them by the right hand of love through the darkened way of mortal life to the bright shining shores of the better land. Father, accept our praises, answer our prayers. Be thou unto us in all future conditions, what thou hast been to us in the past: Father, Friend, and Saviour. Amen.”

The fathers of the Roman Catholic Church Spiritual have spoken their words of hope and offered their

supplications for the good of humanity full often at these public séances :

POPE GREGORY VIII.

“Forever and forever we would worship and adore thee, oh Lord our God, bringing unto thy shrine all beautiful and holy thoughts; praying unto thee for peace and pardon, and for all those conditions that shall render us useful and happy; asking for as much of thy wisdom as may be expedient for us in the present, and in the future, life everlasting. Amen.”

FATHER HENRY FITZ JAMES.

“Father Almighty, thou Saviour and safeguard of every world and every soul, to thee we pray. Upon the frailty of human life, we implore thy blessing. We ask that we may stand in such a near relationship to truth, that it may be understood by us, and when understood, may we find strength within ourselves to project it forth into the lives of those who have it not. We ask that ministering angels of love and mercy and justice may be added to our ranks, who shall go forth into the earth life, ministering unto the needs of the sick and the afflicted, and those who are bowed down by the cares and sorrows of this life; who know not the way to the other life; who see nothing but darkness; who believe in no hereafter; who recognize thee as a God filled with vengeance, that will execute judgments without mercy upon them. Oh give us more of thine angels who will work for those whose minds are shrouded by the superstitions of the earth life, around whose souls are clustered the falsehoods of a false religion. And oh, we ask thee, Great Spirit of Truth, that we may ever be ready, ever be joyous to do thy will and work in thy way, and minister unto those who have need of our ministrations; and thus shall we gain thy kingdom, and lay up for ourselves treasures in

the celestial life, where moth and rust cannot corrupt, and where no thieves break through and steal. Amen."

CARDINAL CHEVERUS.

"Thou Beautiful Spirit, our God, who hath hallowed this day and this hour, and made them beautiful, may it please thee to bestow upon us that truth which shall make us free. May it please thee to inspire us, thy children, who are here — the living and the dead — with thy wisdom, which shall forever burn upon the altar of the soul, lighting it through eternity. May it please thee to baptize us with that love which shall own all men and women as of thee, and therefore very good. And unto thee be the spoken and unspoken praises of our souls forever. Amen."

ARCHBISHOP HUGHES.

"Ye Holy Three in One, Past, Present and Future Good, we pray thee to baptize us this hour with thine own inspiration. We pray thee that the dews of thy goodness may this hour fall upon us. And, in behalf of an oppressed and ignorant humanity, we ask that the abominations of political ungodliness may speedily pass away. That which has corrupted governments and builded the guillotine for the people, oh Infinite Good, may it speedily pass away, and may men of science, in whose souls is an abiding sense of truth, soon find place and power on the earth, and may the governments of earth represent the governments of heaven. May truth, justice and love be their corner stones, and may the mantle of everlasting peace ever enfold them. Mighty Spirit, bless thou the sick and the suffering. Send holy angels to those who are bowed down with grief. Oh, let thy light shine in dark places, where the soul cries out to know of thee — to be saved. We praise thee, Almighty God, for the holy gift of living. We

praise thee for the sublime realities of life; that wherever we go we find ourselves always surrounded by beauty in nature and beauty in mind. We only ask that from the sin of self-righteousness, of bigotry and error, thou, oh Lord, wilt deliver us. Thou hast breathed upon nature, and it has a living soul, from the daisy to the rolling world in space. The murmuring brook says to us, 'Lo! God is here!' and the young world, as it flies among the stars and gathers to itself new elements, and appropriates to itself an orbit, says to the observer, 'Lo! God is here!' And the little child, as it lisps its evening prayer at its mother's knee, says, 'God is here!' Wherever we go, there thou art, oh Infinite Spirit of Truth, to teach us and lead us. Therefore we know that thou art here to bless us; here to redeem the soul from error; here to baptize it in thine own way in the waters of infinite truth. And to thy keeping we intrust these souls and our own, oh Infinite Past, Present, and Future Good. Amen."

FATHER SHAW.

"Ye Holy Spirits, in whom abide love, wisdom, truth and power, ye who are charitable and kind, inspire us this hour, and bring us nearer to your God and to ours. Give us to drink of the water ye have drank of, give us to eat of the bread ye have eaten of, and let us worship at the shrine whereunto ye have worshiped. So shall we come nearer to truth, nearer to wisdom. Ye who are the heaven-appointed evangelists, watching over human life, come to us this hour and inspire these mortals, dispel their shadows, illumine all the darkened chambers of their spiritual being, and lead them nearer to wisdom, nearer to truth. Amen."

FATHER HAWLEY.

“To the Author of all that is, and was, and shall be, we address ourselves in prayer — not proposing to change thy laws, oh Soul of Worlds and Soul of Souls, but desiring to understand them, and that we may place ourselves in harmony with them, that thus we may make no discord in the grand symphony of creation. Mighty Spirit, we, like half savages, stand in the vestibule of creative power, and wonder what that power is, and where it abides. Teach us, oh Mighty Spirit, teach us of thyself; not that thou art not daily, hourly, and momentarily teaching us, do we pray to be taught, but that we are not always conscious of that power which is an ever abiding presence with the soul. But open thou our consciousness toward thyself, and make us to know thee as our Father and our Saviour. Make us to have that faith in thee which amounteth to knowledge. And, oh God, may it please thee to give us power to aid those who are in the darkness of the human life — who are struggling with the superstitions and clouds incident to mortal growth. May it please thee to give us power to raise them from their darkened condition, to unfold their vision, to show them something of the wonders of the higher life; and thus shall thy kingdom come, and so thy will be done by us, wherever we may be. Amen.”

The founders or strong representatives of several sects of Protestant Churches have here borne witness to the knowledge of (not faith in) the goodness of the Over-Soul, that is in them :

JOHN WESLEY.

“Breathe thou upon us, oh Holy Spirit of Truth, that we may live and move in thee. Let thy kingdom come on earth, that is waiting and groaning to be delivered from ignorance — from the darkness of

superstition. And leave us not alone in temptation, but deliver us from all evil. And thy kingdom shall be our kingdom, and thou shalt be our God, forever and forever. Amen."

MATHER BYLES.

"Holy art thou, oh Spirit of the Hour, thou Past, Present, and Future; thou Wisdom, Love and Truth! May we so understand thee, so have thy presence in our hearts as to fear no evil, since thou art with us. And whether we wander in darkness or revel in light, may it be all the same to our consciousness; may we feel secure in thee. Thou Spirit! thou Life! who hast guided us through all the past, who dost sustain us in the present, and dost prophesy of our future, we praise thee. We would stretch out all the powers of our being to grasp thee, to analyze thee, to become one with thee. And, as ministering spirits, we pray thee for light, and life, and love; that we may ever be found doing our duty toward those who dwell in the shadow of the earthly life; who are stretching out their hands in the darkness of time, striving to understand thee. To them, oh Infinite Wisdom, Love and Truth, may we be faithful servants. And finally, when the light of truth shall shine more gloriously upon them and upon us, may we join hands in the worship of the Infinite Spirit—our Father, our God. Amen."

JOHN PIERPONT.

"Come, Holy Spirit, come, that the weary may find rest in thee; come, that the ignorant may learn of thee; come, that the desolate-hearted may rejoice because of thy presence; come, that the wilderness of mourning human hearts may blossom with the roses and lilies of truth, wisdom, and love; come, that the darkness that o'ershadows human hearts may be driven away before thy clear sunlight of truth, and that the dews that have settled upon the

flowers human, because of sorrow, may sparkle, and gladden those human hearts, for it shall lead them unto knowledge. Come, Holy Spirit, come and redeem thy promise: that if thou didst go away, thou wouldst come again and receive all thy children unto thyself, that where thou art there they should be also. There are many who know not of thy presence, who understand not of thy coming; therefore if thou art with them it is all the same to them. Oh, then, open their understanding, and give them to know of truth; illumine all the darkened chambers of their human lives, and reveal thyself unto every human soul, that the soul may stand upon the Mount of Transfiguration and rejoice in thee. Having overcome the darkness of error, may they rejoice in the sunlight of truth. And unto thee, oh Holy Spirit, we will sing our song of praise, and forever and forever worship and adore thee. Amen."

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

"Oh Thou whose loving kindness we behold in this day, which like a precious gem adorns the brow of time, we, thy children, the living and they whom the living call the dead, being gathered here in council, to the end that we may be wiser and better, pray thee to inspire those who shall speak with a knowledge of the truth, and those who shall hear with the power to perceive the truth. And thy children, both the living and the dead, will adore thee forever and forever. Amen."

T. STARR KING.

"Oh, our God, we thank thee for the gift of media, those sensitives who, in all ages, have stood between the living and the dead, between truth and error, between light and darkness, between ignorance and wisdom, and, according to their faithfulness, have been the saviours of the world. And we ask for them humility and faithfulness to the truth; we

ask that each cross shall be well borne while here, that when they shall be called upon to resign their earthly labors, they may, in the other life, hear the 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over small things, I will make thee ruler over great things.' May they be satisfied with themselves. May their own God sanction all their deeds, and thus may they ever live at peace with thee. And, our Father, we thank thee for the gift of those liberal minds who, eschewing error, become convinced of truth, and join thy great army of progress, even here in this life. We thank thee, oh Lord, for those who fearlessly embrace truth and own they have embraced it; and we thank thee for those benevolent souls who can never say no to the poor and needy; for those whose hearts are ever ready, in conjunction with their hands, to bless their fellows; and for those, also, who, having no earthly means, can bless with a kind word, with a loving smile, with a holy benediction. And for the seasons in their beauty, that come like divine teachers fresh from thy hand, we thank thee; for the springtime, with its young life and beauty; for the summer, with its many garlands and fruits, we thank thee; for the autumn, with its sere leaves and cooler winds, we thank thee; for the winter, that covers the earth with its pure white garment, thus protecting the tender rootlets of the flowers that they may come forth again in the springtime to gladden the human heart, we thank thee; for the sunlight and for the shadow, for all these conditions of nature, which are but expressions of thyself, oh Lord, we thank thee. And for that harder experience which comes to us through human suffering, we thank thee; for that which knocks loudly at the door of our sensibility, and causes us to know that we tarry here but a brief time, that there is another life to which we are tending, we thank thee. And for Death, that beautiful angel of change that ignorance has robed in various forms of

terror, we thank thee. And we thank thee, oh our Father, that thine angels from the higher life preceded us, and told us, when here even in the mortal form struggling with disease and decay, that there was a better land, that there was a highway opened over which the soul could retrace its steps and commune with those whom it loved and left on earth. Oh Infinite Spirit, thou hast cared well for all our necessities, and we praise thee to-day for each and all thy blessings; and we ask only that we shall always be strong in truth and in well doing, and that whatever we find to do we shall be ready to do it. Amen."

REV. CHARLES BURROUGHS.

Almighty God, may it please thee to hallow this hour, to make it a sacrament that shall nourish these souls for eternity; may it please thee to bring some special good to each longing heart present; may it please thee to imbue thy ministering spirits with wisdom, love, truth and power; may it please thee to incline our hearts unto wisdom, to open all our spiritual senses to understand thee and thy law; may it please thee, oh Father, to so inspire us with love for those who still remain in the body, in the shadow of death, that we shall be willing to bear their crosses; to aid them in climbing the hill of life, and in securing for themselves a mansion beyond death. And for all thy love, thy care and thy tender mercy over us, we, thy children, will praise and adore thee forever and forevermore. Amen."

ANN LEE.

"Oh, ye saviours of the world, we invoke your presence this hour. Ye who, in every age, have preached the gospel of peace, be with us while we shall worship your God and our God. Let the mantle of your spirit fall upon many heads, and may they speak in your names and prophesy by your lives. Walk ye among the sons and daughters of men, in-

spiring them to holier deeds and holier thoughts, taking away the sword and giving them the plow, taking away all the implements of warfare and giving them those of industry, which speak of peace and prophesy of heaven. Let the light of your righteous deeds illuminate all the dark places of mortality. Enter ye all the homes that are desolated by death; speak peace to the mourner; give comfort to the disconsolate; raise up the downtrodden; and in all things follow your master, the Spirit of Truth, so that the kingdom of heaven may be yours. And as you inspire us, and we follow you, may it be ours also. Amen."

ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

"Most Holy One, we return thee thanks for thy manifold blessings; and we pray for strength to bear life's crosses and to wear its crown. Amen."

ELIAS SMITH.

"Thou Infinite Presence, thou Divinest Good, thy children mortal, and they whom the living call dead, would worship and adore thee. Looking upward and outward from the mists and fogs of imperfect being, we can understand thee. And we ask, oh Infinite Presence, oh Divinest Good, to be taught of thee. We ask that, as thou hast opened the Book of Life for us, thou wilt teach us to read it aright; and we praise thee, oh Spirit of All Good, for what thou hast done for us; for life, with all its varying scenes of love and wisdom and power; for these religious sentiments, which find expression through the soul, we praise thee; for all these varying powers that the soul exhibits in its passage through time, we praise thee. And we ask, our Father, that wherever we may be, we may be conscious of thy presence; and so we may do thy will, and thus enjoy thy blessing and the approbation of our own souls. Amen."

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

“Oh thou Eternal One, whom we ignorantly worship, thou to whom we go with our prayers when we are weary, or when we are glad, thou whose being becomes the safeguard of ours, the eternal presence from which we have come, and to which we go, we praise thee this hour through the weakness of human life. We praise thee for the gift of that human life with its many hells, each one of which, under thy divine guidance, becomes a school wherein the soul is educated for heaven. We praise thee, oh Spirit Eternal, for the many religions that have found an expression on earth, for they each and all are leaves in the sacred volume of the soul. We praise thee for the saviours of every age, they who have stood out from the masses, and have preached the gospel of truth as they understood it. We praise thee for those who heard them, for those whose lives were made better by hearing them. We praise thee for the seasons, with their richness and beauty, for the glory with which thou hast crowned them all. We praise thee that we know that life is one eternal chain, having its beginning and ending in thee, and that we are links in that chain, united one to the other. And we praise thee, oh thou Eternal One, that in this age thou dost speak through the new revelations to thy children here, those who are still clothed upon with the body of mortality. And we praise thee that there are thousands and tens of thousands of souls who have perceived thy revelation, and have made it a joy unto themselves. Receive our praises, and bless thou thy children here, not for our sakes, but for thine own glory. Amen.”

The disciples of Judaism, those whom the world calls Pagan, and the red children of nature, have here (as per citation) lifted up their voices to the Great Spirit—the Fountain of Light:

RABBI LOWENTHAL.

“Coming to thee, oh Israel’s God, oh Infinite Jehovah, we would renew our vows, and in nature’s pure, ever flowing fountain would wash ourselves and be clean—clean from all malice, from all religious darkness, from all that ignorance which belongeth to time, and robing ourselves in nature’s simplest garments, which thou didst give us in the beginning, would enter thy courts with praise, and the heaven of thy wisdom with thanksgiving. We would worship thee as the one God over all. We would recognize thy being in nature and in our hearts. We perceive thy loveliness in all external things, and we read thy power in nature’s care of everything. We give thee many names, yet after all thou art the one God, the Infinite Jehovah, reigning in time and eternity. Thou dost not need that we praise thee. Our prayers cannot change thee, but they may change us. Our prayers cannot raise thee in wisdom, but they may raise us. Our praises may rest at thy feet, but they will be like crowns upon our brows. We ask that the consciousness of thy love may be ever present with every soul here. May they own thee as their God, the Infinite Spirit who loveth all, who careth for all, and will finally restore all from darkness to light, from ignorance to wisdom, from hell to heaven. Amen.”

RABBI SHEIDER.

“Oh thou who art the one God over all worlds and all souls, we invoke thy blessing. Let thy sun of righteousness shine into our souls, making gloriously beautiful all those attributes which are of thee. Let thy blessing come to the ignorant with wisdom,

to the bigot with freedom, to the sick with health, to the doubter with faith, to those who are in the valley of the shadow of human despair with comfort — and may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done by us, this hour and forever more. Amen.”

RAHMOHUN ROY.

“Thou Great Spirit, with whom abideth the issues of life and death, we are here to thank thee for all thy blessings, and to ask thee for more. Believing that thou knowest our needs, it would seem useless that we come to thee through prayer; and yet, through all the scriptures of thy Nature, thou hast taught us to ask for what we need, to put forth the powers of our being for what we would receive. As flowers turn their faces to the sunlight, that they may gather strength and new life, so we turn our faces toward thee, Great Spirit, that we may gather of thy wisdom, of thy power, of thy life. Turning our backs upon our own ignorance, we would be baptized with thy wisdom, and leaving behind the shadows of the past, we would walk straightway into the sunbeams of the present; and we would understand, Great Spirit, what thou requirest at our hands. We would know thy laws, and obey them. We would read thy volume of life well, and profit thereby. We would become ministering spirits of love to those who are spiritually or physically sick. We would become teachers, after thine own divine right, unto those who are spiritually ignorant. We would go down into the hells of life, to rescue from thence thy sons and thy daughters, in thy name, oh Lord; and we would perform all those many, many mighty works that the gods in past ages have performed, all in thy name and for thy glory. Amen.”

ABD-EL-HADDA.

“Mighty Allah, when the night of this life is over and the morning of the other life has come, may

these Christians be satisfied with the Paradise which their earthly deeds have purchased. May the flowers be fresh, the grasses green, the waters clear, the skies cloudless, and the fruits of their good works hanging in plenty from the tree of life. May no star be dimmed by the remembrance of duties badly done, and no sun hide its face in shame from their earthly lives."

ISHMUD KEDA.

"Mighty Allah! thou who art the Great Jehovah of these Christians, wilt thou hear the prayer of thy servant who worshiped at the shrine of Mahomet, who is thy child, and thou our Leader. Wilt thou bless thy servant by blessing these Christians, and guiding them, that when they shall reach the promised land, of which their religion teaches, they shall find temples there made glorious and beautiful by the good deeds of their mortal lives."

SA-GOYE-WA-THA (RED JACKET.)

"Mighty Spirit, we know that thou art great in wisdom, and that thy thoughts fill all the earth and all the heavens, therefore we can trust thee. Thou didst speak to us and to our fathers many moons ago, when we were covered with the darkness of this life, and we heard thee, and did what we could to follow thee; and in the new and brighter hunting-ground of the soul thou again dost speak to us, and we have heard thy voice, and we shall do what we can to follow thee. Though thou didst not give us books, as thou didst our white brothers, yet thou didst give us, as them, the Book of Life, and thou didst tell us to read that book, and to understand it, and by it to find thee. But, Great Spirit, no white man nor Indian has ever yet been able to understand that book, therefore we ask thee to enlighten our understanding, and quicken our thoughts, and shed the light of thine own great soul upon us, so that we may read aright and understand aright, and walk

faster toward thee. Thou didst give us, when here, and since we have ascended to the upper hunting-ground, many tokens of thy pleasure. We are satisfied with them, and we hope that thou art satisfied with us."

Literature, science and polished society have here furnished spirit votaries for the worship of the Infinite:

BARON VON HUMBOLDT.

"Thou Wondrous Power, moving through matter, whose manifestations fill us with wonder, and before whom the philosopher and the savage bow in reverence and adoration, we, thy loyal subjects, would worship thee this hour. Thou Infinite Presence, who determineth the color and the form of every flower, and giveth to the leaf its greenness, we worship and adore thee for thy loving kindness toward us, for the wondrous power and wisdom that thou doth exhibit in all thy creations. And we ask, oh God of all mind and of all matter, that thou wilt lead us still more closely to thyself: that thou wilt, day by day, unfold thy volume of wisdom to us, and give us power to read it aright. We ask, oh Mighty Spirit, that, as we travel through thy wondrous universe, we may ever feel secure in thee; that thy loving kindness may ever be so present in our souls that we shall fear no evil. Amen."

LADY HESTER STANHOPE.

"Oh thou Light, shining in the darkness, which the darkness comprehendeth not, we pray thee to deliver us from ignorance, which makes cowards of us all. We pray thee to establish that peace on earth, which can come alone as the recognition of the holier, the higher, the diviner law. We pray thee to minister especially, through thine angels, to the sick and the afflicted, to those who sorrow in mind or body.

And for these mortals we ask, when they shall close the book of this life, may they find upon the title-page of that other a reward for every good deed done here. Amen."

MARGARET FULLER OSSOLI.

"Thou wondrous Whole, whose body Nature is, and God the Soul! we thy children, have assembled here, the living and the dead, that we may worship and adore thee, by studying the philosophy of life, by mounting the spiral staircase that leads to thee, that overcomes ignorance and sin, and makes the soul at one with thee. Thou Infinite Spirit, ever present, ever lovely, we may approach to perfect prayer and praise, but we understand our ignorance and our weakness, and we know that thou art beyond our comprehension. We may reach out toward thee in our prayers and in our praises, but that is all. But forever and forever thou wilt bless us; thy loving kindness, thy tender mercy will be forever our shield; and thou wilt forever fold us in the mantle of love and bear us onward, forever onward through eternity. May the loving angels gathered here be blessed in their endeavors. May they inspire anew holy purposes and stronger reachings out toward thee. May they dispel the gloom that hovers around some of these human hearts, and show them the sun that is shining 'mid the clouds of earth. And to thee, oh beautiful Spirit of Love, be endless praises."

LORENZO DOW.

"Oh Lucifer, thou Morning Star, whose brightness hath gilded the heavens and the earth, draw nigh unto these souls in mortal, shedding a divine halo over the altar of their being, such as shall drive away the bats and owls of superstition and bigotry. We know thy light hath shone through every age. We know that no soul is without its radiance; yet in behalf of the souls who are gathered here on this

occasion, we beseech thee to shed a newness of thy light upon them, whereby they may come to an understanding of thy truth, and shall be made ready to leave all doubt, all superstition and error, and worship at the shrine of everlasting truth.

Thou art our Father; thou art our Source; thou art the brightening radiance of our souls; thou art him that giveth us our immortality. We cannot understand thee, but we can worship and love thee. In the midst of the darkness of every age, thy wondrous wisdom some soul hath been able to perceive. In the midst of wars, of pestilence, of famine, and of all those sad experiences through which the soul in humanity is called to pass, there thou hast shone, and thy light has been the light that has led every soul unto heaven.

Therefore, oh Son of the Morning, oh Morning Star, unto thee we will ascribe all honor, all glory, all praise, forever and ever. Amen."

HENRY C. WRIGHT.

"Oh ye who are mighty in wisdom and truth, who have gained the victory over ignorance, come, ye holy spirits, and become teachers unto an ignorant humanity. Oh, lift them, and leave them not till the kingdom of righteousness and peace is the inheritance of every living soul. Amen."

CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

"Oh thou who art the Resurrection and the Life, fountain of that constant light burning upon the altar of every conscious life, which will finally redeem it from evil and restore it to peace, we praise thee this hour. We praise thee for the various influences that are flowing from the world of spirit to the world of matter. Like a holy benediction cometh the voice of those whom the living call dead. And we ask, Great Spirit, that it may rest and find a place within every conscious life, leading the soul to

thee, redeeming it from error, and speaking to it those words of peace which are so necessary upon this troubled ocean of humanity. We ask for peace in behalf of nations and individuals. We ask for light in behalf of all thy suffering humanity, and we ask for strength ourselves, in our weakness, that we may give to those who are still weaker than we are ; that we may lead to the fountains of wisdom, love and truth, thy sons and thy daughters, who aspire to go there. Mighty Spirit, receive our praises ; for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

FREDERICK T. GRAY.

"Oh Lord, thou Spirit infinite and just, thou hast tenderly cared for us through all past eternity up to the present moment. Thou hast walked with us through the valley of the shadow of death. Thou hast opened the gates of thine heavenly city, and thou hast called us again to mortal life. Since thou hast guarded us so lovingly in the past, we should be unworthy of thy love if we failed to trust thee, if we failed to lay our endless future upon the altar of thy being, knowing thou wilt care for it.

Oh Lord, thou guardest the sunshine. Thou takest note of the seasons. Thou givest beauty and fragrance to the flowers. Shall the soul fear that thou wilt forsake it?

No, oh Lord, our Father, we will trust thee, and in trusting thee we will endeavor to serve thee, not alone with mouth-utterances, but with thoughts and with deeds — such deeds as shall make ourselves beautiful in thy sight, and beautiful in the sight of all thy ministering spirits. Father of Life! Spirit Eternal! thy power we cannot measure. Thy love is boundless as eternal, and all thou hast, all thou art, we know in thy beneficence thou wilt finally confer upon thy children. All the blessings that are stored in thy vast storehouse, we know we shall

finally receive. And oh, grant that speedily every soul may hear a voice from its own inner life, saying, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! as thou hast been faithful over the small things of life, I will now make thee ruler over greater things.'

We ask no blessing, oh Great Jehovah, upon these thy children, for day unto day thou art blessing them; and when the shades of night fall around them, and sleep comes to their outer natures, then in their inner lives they hold communion with thee. Thou art impressing thine own divine presence upon their being; and when the morning comes they feel to thank thee that thou hast watched over them through the night, and when the night comes they feel to trust thee because in their soul-lives they feel that thou art worthy to be trusted, and that thy power is seen in life and in what men call death.

In all the circumstances of life, either human or divine, thy power is sufficient for all thy children. Accept our praises; hear our prayers. They are offered in the name of all past life, of all present life, and of all life that is to come. Amen."

THOMAS PAINE.

"Oh Life, beautiful Life, in thee we live and move and have our being; and unto thee we are responsible for the use we make of the talents thou hast bestowed upon us. We will endeavor to put forth these talents to the best use of thy kingdom, in the present and the future, so that we may deliver thee thine own, with usury, in the hereafter; that when we hang as ripened fruit on thy wondrous tree, we may be satisfied with ourselves; that we may hear from thy kingdom of wisdom that we have done well with what thou hast bestowed upon us. Then, we shall be well worthy to become inhabitants of the celestial life, the kingdom of happiness. Amen."

THEODORE PARKER.

“Oh thou Eternal God, who flameth over our heads and flowereth under our feet, who art the life of every living thing, we come to thee this hour, not to beseech thee to bestow any more upon us than that we already have, but to ask thee to quicken our perceptions, that we may understand what we have, and be able to be blessed by it.

Oh thou who giveth to the lily its whiteness, to the rose its blush — who doth set every star in the grand mosaic of the skies in its proper place, wilt thou not care for us, and give us our proper setting, our proper place in life? Wilt thou not guide our souls away from all darkness, into thine own clear light? Wilt thou not kindle upon the altar of our being that fire that shall burn up all the dross, and bring out all the fine gold of our natures? We believe thou wilt. We shall trust thee as the Eternal Good, guiding all things in nature, and forgetting not our souls. We shall trust thee, oh our Father and our Mother, for thy wisdom and thy love.

May we, oh Great Spirit of Benevolence and Justice, become comforting spirits to those who sit in darkness and in doubt. May we be eyes to the blind and ears to the deaf. May we lead those whose spiritual senses are not quickened to the things of the higher life to a condition wherein they shall be baptized with truth — shall become recipients of greater peace and greater joy. Thus shall thy kingdom come, and we do thy will forever and ever. Amen.”

“Lift us, Holy Spirit, nearer and still nearer to thee. Hold us, oh Mother of Life, to thy loving heart, and teach us to understand thee. We behold the glory of the heavens and the earth, and we feel thy greatness everywhere, and thy loving kindness enters into all forms and baptizes every soul. Yet

thy greatness is so far beyond us that we cannot understand thee. The majesty of thy power stands out so great and grand that we instinctively fall down and worship thee. Oh our Father and our Mother, thou hast led us with gentle hand through earth, and we find ourselves drinking in the wisdom of the higher life, yet we ask for more and still more, to be drawn nearer and still nearer to thee, to understand thyself and our relations to thee still better, so that we may do our duty and worship thee more truly in spirit and in truth. Men tell us that there is crime on the earth; that it walks abroad at noon-day; and because of crime the prayers of thy children go outward to thee, asking that it may be removed; but oh, thou Spirit, who seest not as thy children see, we know that in thine own time and according to thy wisdom thou wilt remove all dark spots from the robe of humanity, and it shall be washed clean in the clear flowing fountain of truth.

Grant, oh Loving Spirit, to shed thy holy influence upon the hearts of these thy children, causing all the tender flowers of their being to put forth through newness of life, worshiping thee as they have never worshiped before. Oh may they turn a leaf in life's page that shall be spotless; and may they dedicate it to thee, and may it be written over and over and over again with their good deeds, with their holy thoughts. Oh grant that as thy children learn thy will, they may have strength to do thy will also; and when the cares of life are presented to them, oh grant, great Spirit of Love, that they may take them up cheerfully and bear them honorably, even though it be up the steeps of Calvary. Oh grant that thy children may not fear to do their duty, however hard it may be, however dark the path through which they may be led. Grant that their inner faith may be strong enough, so strong that no outer tempest shall affect them, that no night shall take away their inner

morning, no external tumult shall affect their inward peace.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; may thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven; give thy children this day their daily bread, and forgive them their sins, even as they forgive those who sin against them; leave them not in temptation, but deliver them from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

CONCLUSION.

The reader who has perused to the end this narrative of an earnest, self-devoting life, and the specimen sheaves of its harvest of good here garnered, may with profit at the present juncture cast the eye of retrospection upon the pages ended, and weigh the lessons therein contained. We have a little child, whose spiritually developed ear caught the echo of the rising melody of the angels while yet afar from the acceptance or appreciation of a cold and calculating world; we have a young girl mourning the loss of a mother's love and a mother's earthly presence, prematurely broadening into sad-eyed womanhood under the forcing process of unremitted manual labor and the absence of those luxuries which so often fetter minds, both male and female, within the bounds of youthful exuberance, till even the second decade of years has passed; we find an invalid wife (a prophet of the new dispensation, though unknown to herself) after due satisfaction that she is not deceived, giving her powers to the work of the public dissemination of the good tidings of Spiritualism, in obedi-

ence to the call of the angels; and, through every trial, remaining true to the faith that is in her, and the world of spirits that is around her. In sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow, "through evil report, and through good report," she has since fearlessly stood in defence of her cherished convictions, reiterating through her inspired lips the gist of Nature's grand refrain: "Soul, thou shalt never die!" We find her, at last, known in her capacity as a public medium, of irreproachable character and undeniable reliability, wherever among men the truth of modern Spiritualism is proclaimed; yet in her own spirit clinging humbly to the holy recollections of days gone by—the memory of loved ones passed on—and prizing most of all the glorious assurance of that meeting in the Morning Land, where the cross of earthly disappointment and suffering shall be changed to the crown of an ideal attained.

This work is not transcribed for purposes of mere earthly reputation or renown. To those who have seen the mystic curtain uprolled while yet in the mortal form, and have stood awestruck beneath the great shadow of the Infinite, what are the petty, fading distinctions of this material world? No stirring anthem rings along these quiet pages, but the sentient ear may catch, if it listens well, the solemn minor strain that flows over the border of physical decay to cheer the pilgrim soul. If a single reader, in perusing these brief memorials, culled here and there from the rugged experiences of one of earth's mental emancipators, shall clearly interpret the intention of their presentation, grow stronger

in the determination for right doing and purity of life in this world, and inhale but a breath of that divine afflatus which tells us *we* shall live though all the stars grow dim, this book has not been written in vain.

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